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Lengy sculp.

M^{rs} DAVENPORT as MISS WINIFRED EVANS.

*Miss Win. — I'll no longer be accountable for measures
that I am not suffered to guide.*

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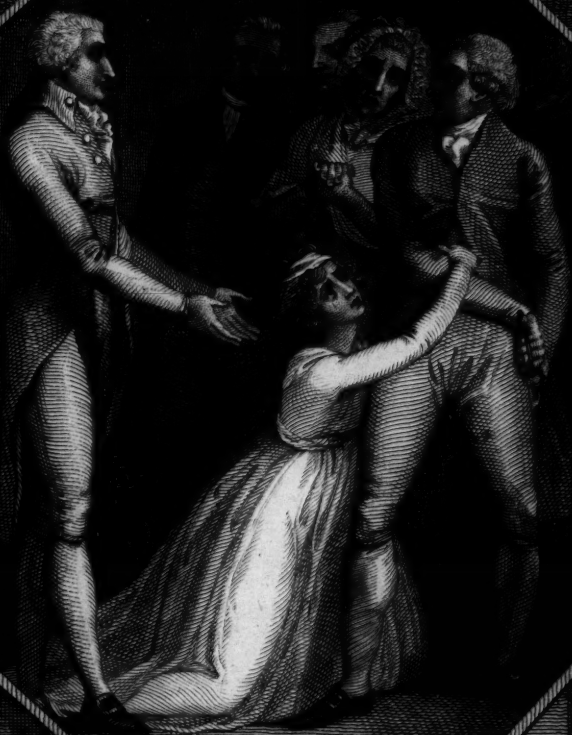
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B. R. A. I. N. E. D.



THE SCHOOL FOR RAKES

Hamlet. *You shall not go for I will bring you back.*

Act V.

Sc. II.

Engraved by J. Smith

Printed by J. Smith



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THE
SCHOOL FOR RAKES.

A *Comédie de Beaumarchais*
COMEDY,

BY MRS. ELIZABETH GRIFFITHS. *H*

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,
AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK,
By Permission of the Manager.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.

LONDON:

Printed for, and under the Direction of
GEORGE CAWTHORN, British Library, STRAND,

MDCCXCV.



TO
DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

SIR,

DEDICATIONS are generally meant to do honour to the Patron, by revealing their private virtues, or recording their public merits. But neither of these subjects occasioned the present address; for while the undivided applause of a nation, proclaims the latter, my small plaudit must be lost, in the general voice; and while the friendship and esteem, of so many of the first personages of the age, are, at once, the strongest testimony, and most pleasing reward of the former, my simple concurrence must be deemed superfluous.

To neither of these motives, then, is to be attributed my publicly placing this play, under your patronage; but to a desire of acknowledging my gratitude, for the great trouble you have taken with it, and of indulging a much higher vanity, than that of being its author; by declaring to the world, that you are my friend, and that I am, sir,

Your much obliged,

And most humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

January, 1769.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE hint of this Comedy was taken from a much admired performance of Monsieur Beaumarchais, stiled *Eugenie*, which Mr. Garrick was so kind to put into my hands some time ago. I was immediately struck with the elegant simplicity of language, and sentiment, which characterizes that work, and which, indeed, should do the same, in all dramatic writings, where neither the persons, or situations of the drama are elevated above the common degrees of life.

I immediately adopted the plan, and set about adapting it to the English Stage. But, as I proceeded in this work, I found I had great difficulties to encounter; for, though Mons. Beaumarchais had laid the scene of his play in England, he had, unluckily, adopted Spanish manners. This circumstance appeared an unsurmountable obstacle to me, and I should have immediately relinquished all hopes from my project, if Mr. Garrick had not, in the most friendly manner, lent me his assistance, to overcome this otherwise insuperable difficulty.

How far I have succeeded, in rendering this piece worthy of the English Stage, must be left to the candor of the public. I shall only add, that the characters of Frampton, Willis, Loyd, I may add Mrs. Winifred, also, are of English growth. The character of Lord Eustace, too, has received some additions; and, I hope that his compunction, for the crime he had committed, will render him more worthy the favour of a British audience, whose generous natures cannot

brook the representation of any vice upon the stage, except in order to have it punished, or reclaimed. As the situation of Harriot would not admit of any change, I have not attempted to deviate from the gentle, and interesting Eugenie, of Monsieur Beaumarchais.

I had written thus far, before I could have been informed of the very kind and favourable reception with which the public have honoured this piece; and I think myself extremely happy at having this opportunity of assuring them, that I shall ever retain the most grateful sense of their indulgence to me.

I am particularly bound to Mrs. Clive, on this occasion, who undertook the study of a new part, at a time when she had determined to quit the stage, and whose kindness to the Author, and attention to the public, made her hazard her health, by performing it-- I need not say how well---when her physicians would have confined her to her chamber.

I acknowledge myself also much obliged to the rest of the performers in my play, for having acquitted themselves so much to the advantage of the piece, and the approbation of the public; to whom I have the honour to be,

A much obliged, and

Most obedient Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

PROLOGUE.

Written by a FRIEND. Spoken by Mr. KING.

*THE scribbling gentry, ever frank and free,
To sweep the stage with prologues, fix on Me.
A Female representative I come,
And with a Prologue, which I call a broom,
To brush the critic cobwebs from the room.
Critics, like spiders, into corners creep,
And at new plays their bloody revels keep;
With some small venom, close in ambush lie,
Ready to seize the poor dramatic Fly :
The weak and heedless soon become their prey ;
But the strong Blue Bottle will force its way,
Clean sweep its wings, and hum another day.
Unknown to Nature's laws, we've here one evil,
For Flies, turn'd Spiders, play the very devil !
But why choose me to fill a woman's place ?
Have I about me any female grace,
Sweetness of smile, or lily-dimpled face ?
Whate'er I have, I'll try my winning ways,
Low'ring my voice, and rising from my stays ;
Warm with anxiety, this hat my fan,
I'm now an Auth'ress, and no longer man.*

*The ladies, I am sure, my brat will spare,
For I'm not young, nor am I over fair;
Assemblies, balls, deck'd out, I ne'er appear at,
My husband is the only man I leer at.*

*Ye Beaux, whose minds are flimsy as your shapes,
Who scorn all writings as the fox the grapes;
Let not a woman's faults ill humours breed,
I own my failings—I both write and read. [Cries.
Sit still two hours, for one not fair nor young!—
You would not wait for Venus, half so long.
Could I please *You, and †You, more patient folks,
With some small nature, and some harmless jokes;
These ‡splendid rows would not their mite deny,
They will, as well as you, both laugh and sigh,
Sigh when you laugh, and laugh whene'er you cry.
Ye Soldiers, Sailors, valiant as you're free,
O lend your aid, protect my babe and me!
Towards spare none; but you, the truly brave,
Women, and children, will for ever save!
Here ends my task—and for our last expedient—
The auth'ress makes you this [Curtseys.] and this
[Bows.] Your most obedient.*

* Pit. † Gallery. ‡ Boxes.

Dramatis Personæ.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

Lord EUSTACE,	-	-	Mr. Cautherley.
Sir WILLIAM EVANS,	-	-	Mr. Holland.
Colonel EVANS,	-	-	Mr. Palmer.
Mr. FRAMPTON,	-	-	Mr. Reddish.
Captain LOYD,	-	-	Mr. King.
WILLIS, Valet to Lord Eustace,			Mr. Dodd.
ROBERT,	-	-	Mr. Baddeley.

Women.

Mrs. WINIFRED,	-	-	Mrs. Clive.
HARRIOT,	-	-	Mrs. Baddeley.
BETTY, Servant to Harriot,			Mrs. Smith.



THE
SCHOOL FOR RAKES.

ACT I. SCENE I.

*An Apartment in Lord Eustace's House. Enter Mr.
FRAMPTON and WILLIS.*

Mr. Frampton.

WELL, Willis, they are come !

Wil. Yes, sir, but I am quite of opinion, they will soon begone again, at least out of this house ; for as I assisted in carrying in their trunks, and band-boxes, merely to contemplate their countenances, I could perceive the strongest marks of dissatisfaction in Sir William's face ; and when the servants retired from the parlour, I overheard him, and his sister Winifred, in high disputation—Both their Welch bloods were up, and a fine splutter there was between them ; but, though you might have heard them into Hyde-Park, they spoke so quick, that I could only pick up an odd word here and there, as if Sir William did not like this part of the town.

Fram. I wish they had staid in the country, with all my heart.

Wil. I believe there are more people of that mind, than you, sir. I fancy my lord would give a good round sum, that they had remained fixed to the freehold at Langwillan.—Though, to be sure, Miss Harriot is, by many degrees, the handsomest girl that ever his lordship was fond of.

Fram. You must not, Willis, talk of her, in that stile—She is a young woman both of character, and family.

Wil. So much the better for her, sir, if she has a good family of her own, for I am pretty sure she never will belong to ours.

Fram. I must again desire you, Mr. Willis, not to speak so lightly of this affair—the real friends of your lord will not be much inclined to mirth or ridicule, upon this occasion, I can tell you.

Wil. As we were both placed here, by my lord, to manage this matter for him, I thought there could be no great harm to argue a little upon it, Mr. Frampton.

Fram. I am not, at present, in a humour for conversation.

Wil. O, sir, another time will do as well.

Fram. I would have you go immediately, and acquaint Lord Eustace with their arrival—Let him also know, that I shall wait upon the ladies, and make his apology, for not being here to receive them.

Wil. You have been very obliging to his lordship, upon many such occasions, Mr. Frampton; but I

fancy he never stood more in need of your assistance and mine too, than he does at present.

Fram. Though in the same cause, I believe our services will tend to different purposes—I shall not flatter his vices.

Wil. Lord, Mr. Frampton, you are grown so prudish of late!

Fram. You are grown too familiar, Mr. Willis—You'll oblige me, and obey your lord's commands, at the same time, by going directly with the message I desired you.

Wil. I did not mean to offend you, sir, by observing how useful your friendship has been to my lord.—Has your honour any farther commands?

Fram. None, but those I gave you.

Wil. Here's more to do with these shabby, ruined, hangers-on of my lord's, than all the family beside. I think myself as good a man as he, and if he had not a little too much spirit for me, I would tell him as much. [*Aside.*]

[*Exit grumbling.*]

Fram. To what a state have I reduced myself, when even such a wretch as that dares to upbraid me! What now remains of all the scenes of mirth and revelry, which I have been partaker of beneath this roof! A ruined fortune, a disturbed mind, and a broken constitution, are the only mementos that are now left me—Yet I think I have fortitude sufficient to bear all these—but to be obliged to minister to another man's vices, for a wretched subsistence, is to degrade human nature below the brutes.—Thank heaven,

however, I have escaped being concerned in this iniquitous affair; and though my friendship for Lord Eustace, will not suffer me to desert him, in his present difficulties, I am determined to proceed no farther, than is consistent with my honour, and my peace.—I have consented to see the lady, and excuse his absence.—I must wait for Sir William's going out, and then hasten to fulfil my promise. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

Changes to another Apartment. Discovers Sir WILLIAM, Mrs. WINIFRED, and HARRIOT, in travelling dresses—trunks, cloak-bags, &c. BETTY attending.

Sir *W.* I tell you, again and again, sister Winifred, I am not satisfied.

Mrs. *Win.* As to that matter, brother, you know you never are satisfied, with what any person does, but yourself. I shall, therefore, make myself perfectly easy, on that head.

Sir *W.* That's more than I shall be, while I am in this house, I can tell you—I have very solid objections to staying here—A young, idle, rakish lord—

Mrs. *Win.* What a vulgar objection! I declare, Sir William, if I were not acquainted with your ancestry, I should suspect you to be descended from mechanics. But I hope the family of Ap Evans, is known to be quite as ancient as——

Sir *W.* Adam at least, sister——But let me now inform you, that Lord Eustace is placed in a much higher rank, than any of your boasted ancestors have ever been; and that I hate obligations to persons above me; for the only satisfaction I ever felt in receiving favours, arose from the prospect of repaying them.

Mrs. *Win.* Pride, absolute pride, brother!

Sir *W.* It is an honest one, at least, you must allow, that inclines persons to discharge their debts of honour, as well as of law.

Mrs. *Win.* Pray, Sir William, give me leave to ask you—where is the mighty matter of interchanging civilities, between persons of a certain rank? Lord Eustace spent some months at your house in the country——

Sir *W.* Not by my invitation, sister, but yours——You know I was at my estate in Devonshire, the greatest part of the time he spent at Langwillan——I have, therefore, neither right nor inclination, to accept of his house——Besides it is extremely inconvenient to me, as I have so much business to transact in Lincoln's Inn.

Mrs. *Win.* You should have written to your broker, then, to provide you apartments in some of the stoves on t' other side of Temple Bar, Sir William; but as to my niece and me, we don't choose to be suffocated, I must inform you.

Sir *W.* Why, this place, as you say, is airy enough. When I was last in London, about twelve years ago,

there was not a house within a mile of it---but all the fools of the nation have now crouded up to the capital, and made the head too large for the body; and this very place, where I used to send my horses to graze, begins now to look something like a street.

Mrs. Win. Like a street, Sir William!

Sir W. Let us have done with wrangling, sister; I give it up—This air may be better for my girl—I shall stay here, therefore, for the short time I remain in town, though I don't like it—You are content, I hope—But what says my Harriot? Why so grave? I expected to have seen you as blithe, as one of the kids upon our mountains, at your arrival in London.

Har. I find myself a little fatigued, sir.

Sir W. You were all life and spirit, during our journey---the bad air of this town can't have affected you already, child. But tell me how you like this house?

Har. I think it very retired, sir.

Mrs. Win. Why, really, Miss Harriot, I don't believe my lord intended following business, or opening shop, when he took it; but surely, for persons of distinction, it is the very spot one would desire. I am astonished at your want of taste, child---Sir William, I know, loves noise.---I think there is nothing else to wish for here.

Har. Except the owner of the mansion. [*Aside.*]

Betty. Pray, madam, which is to be my young lady's apartment?

Mrs. Win. That upon the right hand, child——

you had better go with her, Harriot, and adjust your dress.---O, Betty, bid them look into the coach for my snuff-box; they'll find it on the seat or in the pockets.

[Exit Harriot and Betty.

Don't you think you shall be full late for your lawyers, Sir William?

Sir W. Yes, as I have so far to go to them---Who is there?

Enter BETTY, with the snuff-box.

Betty. Here's the box, madam.

[Gives it to her, and exit.

Enter ROBERT.

Sir W. Send David for a hackney-coach---Take this key, and bring me a parcel of papers, which you will find tied up in my strong box, Robert.

Rob. Yes, sir.

[Exit Robert.

Mrs. Win. I hope, Sir William, you have your address written upon your cards, and that you have ordered your letters to be directed to Lord Eustace's house. As his lordship honours me with his friendship, I think it necessary that our acquaintance should be informed of his great politeness.

Sir W. His lordship honours me with his friendship! how well the traffic is kept up, in that phrase, between vanity and vanity! [Aside.]---I had ordered my letters to Serle's Coffee-house; but since it is determined that I must stay here, I shall direct them to be sent to me.

Mrs. *Win.* I must beg, Sir William, that you will order all the newspapers and magazines to be sent here also. My mental faculties are quite at a stand--- I have not had the least political information, these four days.

Enter ROBERT.

Rob. Here are the papers, sir.

Mrs. *Win.* Are they of this day, Robert ?

Sir *W.* They are of much older date, sister, and will not, I fancy afford you much entertainment.— Get my hat and cane: do you know, Robert, where Captain Lloyd lodges ?

Rob. In Craven-street, sir; they told me at Tre-vallin.

Sir *W.* Direct the coachman there. [*Exit Robert.*

Mrs. *Win.* For Heaven's sake, Sir William, what do you loiter for? It will be monstrous late before you can return—you won't be back by dinner.

Sir *W.* You seem so very impatient for my setting out, sister, that I cannot imagine you should be very anxious for my coming back again. I shall go first to Captain Lloyd's.

Mrs. *Win.* You are, doubtless, at liberty to go where you please, Sir William, but I hope you will not think of incumbering us with his visits here.

Sir *W.* You amaze me! Not receive the uncle of the man who is to marry my daughter ?

Mrs. *Win.* That may be sooner said than done, I fancy, Sir William.

Sir *W.* You are mistaken, I never yet have falsified my promise.

Mrs. *Win.* A pretty alliance, truly, for my niece and your daughter. But let me tell you, sir, if Harriot had not a shilling, her family and her beauty would intitle her to a much better match, than your colonel; who has nothing but an old tottering castle, a scarlet coat, and a sword, to settle by way of jointure.

Sir *W.* Your absurdity distracts me. What has your family and beauty done for you? And I dare say you once rated them as high as you do Harriot's.

Mrs. *Win.* You'll pardon me, brother, I understand genealogy better than so---Though there is not a very great difference between my niece's years and mine, she has one generation more in her table than I; which, let me tell you, is of no small consequence to those who know how to set a proper value upon family.

Sir *W.* Family! Nonsense! Let those who have no other merit to support them, build on that; but, know, that I despise it; and to make an end of this ridiculous altercation for ever, I shall inform you, that eight years ago, when Harriot was but a child, and the colonel was sent young abroad, to serve his country, I liked him so well, that I promised his father, if the young fellow returned with his life and honour, my daughter should be his.

Mrs. *Win.* I have ever disapproved of that method of affiancing young persons.---Have you no idea that it is possible the colonel may dislike your daughter?

Sir *W.* I am not very apprehensive on that account.

Mrs. *Win.* Have you no fears of her refusing him?

Sir *W.* None.---Bred up in retirement, and innocence, she can have formed no attachment; and her obedience to a fond father, will certainly incline her to dispose of both her hand and heart where his prudence shall direct.

Enter ROBERT.

Rob. Sir, the coach is ready.

Sir *Win.* [*Looking at his watch.*] 'Tis later than I thought it was—Why, I sha'n't be back to dinner—I shall go no where but to the captain's; if I don't meet with him, I shall return, directly. Put up these papers, Robert [*Exit Sir William.*]

Mrs. *Win.* Desire Miss Evans to come to me, and pray, good Robert, send out for the last Gazette, directly. There may be a thousand treaties on foot, that I am ignorant of. [*Exit Robert.*] What an absurd man, is my brother! His ideas are dreadfully confined. His daughter's hand and heart will follow her obedience! thank heaven they are not now to be disposed of.

Enter HARRIOT.

What, not begun to dress, niece?

Har. My spirits are too much agitated, madam, to think of dress.

Mrs. *Win.* For Heaven's sake, child, do n't talk in this doleful strain to me—I can easily conceive that

your father's presence may distress you, as he is so totally ignorant of your good fortune, but with me it appears ridiculous.

Har. I am, indeed, madam, infinitely distressed, by my father's ignorance of my situation.

Mrs. Win. What a fuss is here about your father? You know he would never have given his consent to your marrying Lord Eustace, if he had been asked, he hates men of quality; and as my lord is not yet in possession of his fortune, I doubt if he would even have thought it a good match.

Har. I wish he were acquainted with it, be it good or bad.

Mrs. Win. I tell you, child, I lost two excellent matches myself, by waiting for advice; and by that means giving time to the parties to consider of it, so it came to nothing; but I now tell you, that by my prudence, your good fortune does not admit of a doubt.

Har. Would to heaven it did not!

Mrs. Win. You are the very counterpart, of your father; never content with any thing—Are you not intitled to *supporters* and *coronets* upon your coach? And when the Evans's arms are quartered with my lord's, and well emblazoned, there won't be so handsome an equipage in London.

Har. Yet the possessor may be wretched, madam!

Mrs. Win. Wretched, and a countess!—I think that scarce possible. But what is it you would have, child? Have I not, with the greatest address imagin-

able, managed matters, with my headstrong brother, and triumphed over his obstinacy? Are you not at this instant lodged in your husband's house?

Har. What is his house, while he is absent from it? I hoped to have met him here—My letters must have informed him——

Mrs. Win. Perhaps his and your father, my Lord Delville, Harriot, may have claimed his lordship's attendance. It is only people of no consequence, who are masters of themselves; and therefore pretend to dignify their insignificance, with the title of independence. But persons of quality, my dear, never presume to rebel against the laws of subordination.—But this is a political secret which you are yet ignorant of, child.

Har. He appeared to be perfect master of his own time, when we were first acquainted; nor did his engagements seem to interfere with his inclinations, till after you had commanded me to receive his hand.

Mrs. Win. 'Till after I commanded you!—Really, Miss Evans, any person who was to hear you talk in this manner, might suppose that I had compelled you, to marry Lord Eustace; but, perhaps miss, you had rather have been sacrificed to your father's ridiculous attachment to Colonel Llody, and been buried alive in the old castle of Trevallin.

Har. Notwithstanding all your attention to my happiness, madam, if my lord no longer loves me, I must be miserable.

Mrs. Win. Can he hinder your being a countess,

simpleton? But, pr'ythee, what can have put all these melancholy thoughts into your head? Did ever any man appear to be more in love than he?

Har. O, no! he was all tenderness; he wept our parting: I wept too, yet found a pleasing softness in that grief he seemed to share.—What a change!

Mrs. Win. Revolutions are common in all states, child; and if you understood politics, you would not be so much surprized at them.

Enter ROBERT.

Rob. Mr. Frampton, madam, desires to see my young lady.

Har. Mr. Frampton! I don't know such a person: do you know him, Robert?

Rob. I know nothing more of him, madam, than that he lives in this house, and has a fine man to attend him. There are a power of people coming and going, but I can't tell who they be.

Mrs. Win. He must certainly be a friend or relation of your lord's. I think we had better step into the parlour to receive him, lest your father's return should interrupt us. [*Aside to Harriot.*—We will see the gentleman below, Robert, and wait on him directly.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Changes to a Garden Parlour. Enter Mr. FRAMPTON.

Fram. I feel myself extremely shocked at this affair, both for Lord Eustace and the unhappy girl, it is an infamous business, and I am certain it must turn out ill.

Enter ROBERT.

Rob. The ladies will wait on you immediately, sir.

[*Exit Robert.*]

Fram. Would the interview were over!—If she is but half so amiable, as Lord Eustace has described her, I fear I shall acquit myself but indifferently of his commission.—Beauty, that makes most men knaves, makes me honest; for I hold it the lowest baseness to be capable of admiring and betraying an innocent creature in the same moment.

Enter Mrs. WINIFRED and HARRIOT.

Fram. I come, madam, from Lord Eustace to your ladyship——

Mrs. Win. By accosting my niece in that manner, sir, I suppose you are one of his lordship's particular friends; but pray be more guarded, sir, and do not call my niece ladyship—That time is not yet come.

Fram. I stand corrected, madam.

Har. How does Lord Eustace, sir? I hope he is well.

Fram. Perfectly so, madam, though extremely concerned at having it not in his power, to receive your ladyship——

Mrs. Win. Again, sir!

Fram. —The moment of your arrival; but his attendance on his father, who is at present ill in Berkshire, prevented him that happiness.

Mrs. Win. Aye, I knew it——Did not I tell you so, Miss Harriot?

Har. Pray, sir, when may we expect to see Lord Eustace? I hope his father's illness is not dangerous?

Fram. No, madam, I hope not; though old men's lives are certainly precarious. I am sure your lord will leave him the first moment it is possible, as I well know he burns with impatience to throw himself at your feet.

Mrs. Win. I hope your mind is easy now, child?—She may be a countess sooner than I thought for; and if my lord can get into the ministry, I may be of some consequence to my friends. [Aside.]

Har. I am much obliged to you, sir, for the trouble you have taken.——I by no means wish that Lord Eustace should neglect his duty to Lord Delville, or distress himself in any other way on my account; though I sincerely desire the happiness of seeing him.

Fram. His inclinations, madam, I am satisfied, more than keep pace with yours; and you may, with great probability, expect to see his lordship either to-day or to-morrow morning.

Mrs. Win. You alarm me vastly, sir; I would not have his lordship catch us in this dishabille for any

consideration. I beg, child, you will go to your toilet
—Bless me, what figures we are!

Har. I shall attend you, madam. You have made
me very happy, sir—but do you think that he will come
to night?

Fram. I fear it is not in his power, madam.

Har. Come when he will, I shall rejoice to see him.

Mrs. Win. Pray, niece, come away, now. Sir, your
humble servant—You do n't know but his lordship
may be here in a few minutes. [*To Harriot.*

[*Exit Mrs. Win. and Har.*

Fram. I never lied with a worse grace—By heaven
that girl is an angel, and Lord Eustace, of course, a
devil! What a delicate sensibility in her countenance!
what softness in her voice! The man who could first
injure and then forsake such a woman, deserves to be
marked as the most infamous, because he must be the
most cruel of his sex—I have some consolation in
thinking that Lord Eustace, though ten years younger,
is ten times a greater——

Enter Lord EUSTACE behind:

Lord Eust. —What, what, Frampton!—I will lay
ten thousand pounds that is impossible, though you
did not finish the sentence—Do you think I should
lose, Frampton?

Fram. I certainly do, my lord, though you were to
determine the bet yourself. But this is no time for
fooling. I am astonished at your imprudence—I
thought you had determined not to come this night—
what can have changed your purpose?

Lord *Eust.* Have you seen Harriot, Frampton, and can you ask that question? My mind, restless, distracted, and impatient, has impelled me hither— But tell me have you seen her?

Fram. I have seen Lady Eustace.

Lord *Eust.* You startle me! Do n't talk so loud--- Are you sure that no one can overhear us?

Fram. Not a creature---Sir William is gone abroad; and the ladies are retired to dress.

Lord *Eust.* What said Harriot to my absence?

Fram. The tears which seemed to have dimmed her lovely eyes, reproached you silently; but not an angry word escaped her lips.

Lord *Eust.* Do not add to my distress, Frampton! By Heaven, my heart bleeds for the unhappy Harriot! Had I, like you, been born a private man, and not at once bound down, by the vile trammels of family and dependence, the world should not have bribed me, to forsake her.

Fram. The sense, you now seem to have of your own situation should have operated sooner, my lord, and prevented your involving an innocent young woman, in certain ruin.

Lord *Eust.* No, Frampton, no! that was beyond my power; I loved her to distraction—nay, I do love her still—But let us talk no more upon this subject; it softens me to weakness; and as I am dependent on my father, I must obey him—I hope she has not heard of my intended marriage.

Fram. No, no! the devil is too great a gainer by your schemes to blast them.

Lord Eust. Don't you think it too late in the day for you to turn methodist, Ned?

Fram. It is never too late, my lord, for a man to condemn and forsake his follies; and young as you are, I heartily wish this was the time appointed for your doing so likewise.

Lord Eust. These sentiments have at least the grace of novelty to recommend them from you, Mr. Frampton.

Fram. My sentiments, my lord, are of little consequence to you: but the time draws near, when you must justly suffer in the opinion of one who ought to be dear to you. Miss Evans cannot be much longer deceived—and when I reflect upon the vile artifices that were used to draw her into a feigned marriage, by Heaven I cannot help detesting you, and every one of the infernal agents who were any way concerned in it.

Lord Eust. O, Frampton! my heart tells me that I deserve your detestation—Why, why were you not with me, to save me from the sad effects of my wild youthful passions! The wretches who were near me but inflamed them.

Fram. The attachments of mean persons, are always founded in self-interest, my lord, nor was there ever yet a solid friendship form'd in vice.

Lord Eust. Don't upbraid me with my miseries, Frampton, but think what a situation is mine. Though

I feel the errors of my conduct, and would repair them, I am so much involved in my own toils, that I find it impossible to break them. What would I not give even to postpone this fatal marriage!

Fram. Postpone it! aye, for ever!

Lord Eust. Could I do that, I might yet be happy, Frampton; but matters are gone too far—every thing was settled, between my father, and Lady Anne's guardians, before I came to town, and I am certain he never will be brought to relinquish the great advantage of her immense fortune.

Fram. And can you, my lord, be brought to consider those advantages, as an equivalent, for your peace, and honour?

Lord Eust. What would you have me do?

Fram. Avow your situation to Lord Delville.

Lord Eust. Were it a common folly I had committed, Frampton, I might hope for his forgiveness; but the infamy which must deservedly attend my conduct, in this affair, would probably make him cast me from his heart, and fortune, for ever.

Fram. You are certainly in very difficult circumstances, my lord, nor can I discover any means of extricating you from them.

Lord Eust. The only miserable hope I have now left, is founded on the gentleness of Harriot's nature, which may enable me to prevail on her to return into the country, before she hears of my intended marriage.

Fram. It is rather shameful, my lord, to erect a sanctuary for our vices, upon the virtues of others.

Lord *Eust.* I acknowledge it, Frampton; but were Harriot removed from the probability of hearing of this hateful marriage, my mind would be more at ease, and I might then possibly think of some expedient to break it off.

Framp. There is some merit in that thought, my lord; and now let me know how I can serve you.

Lord *Eust.* You shall hear—That villain Langwood, my father's steward, who persuaded me into this sham marriage, and personated the clergyman, on that occasion, is now dying, and writes me word, that he is distracted with the horrors of his conscience, and is determined to ask the young lady's forgiveness—a letter from him to the family would discover all.

Fram. That would, indeed, be fatal; but how can I prevent it?

Lord *Eust.* You must remain in this house, and take care that my servants prevent their receiving any letters, without bringing them first to you. I will order Willis to intercept them.

Fram. He is fit for the office; but this is a very odious affair, my lord. However, I have promised to assist you, and if I can prevail upon myself, I will go so far as to prevent Langwood's hastening the catastrophe, which I much fear will be a sad one.

Lord *Eust.* You know not how you torture me! But let me now indulge my fond impatience, and see my lovely Harriot.

Fram. You must not think of it; I would advise you to retire directly.

Lord Eust. It is impossible I should obey you! I long, yet dread, to see her, Frampton.

Fram. It will require a good deal of courage, my lord, to support the interview; for I really think, that an injured, innocent woman, is a very formidable object. But though you may be brave enough for the encounter, I must prevent it for the present, as I have but just now apologized for your absence, by telling her you were in Berkshire, with your father; and the inconsistency of your immediate appearance might justly alarm her. I would, therefore, have you withdraw, immediately, lest any of the family should see you.

Lord Eust. You have a right to direct me; and, at your desire, I'll defer my visit for a little time; but I can have no rest till I behold her.

Fram. I don't fancy your meeting will contribute much to the quiet of your mind.

Lord Eust. I do not hope it should—But never yet was that mind so distressed, since it had first the power of thinking.

Fram. Peace and guilt seldom cohabit, my lord.

Lord Eust. True, Frampton, true—and if young men, like myself, would but calculate the pains and difficulties, which are the natural consequences of vice, and how much they over-balance its transitory joys, they would be shocked at a traffic, where certain loss must be the reward of their industry.

Fram. The being sensible of our errors, is the first step to amendment; for no man ever sets seriously

about getting out of debt, till he is thoroughly apprized of the vast sum he owes.—But come, my lord, let us retire immediately; I hear some of the family in motion—this way quickly. [Exeunt.]

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Drawing-Room in Lord Eustace's House. Enter Lord EUSTACE.

Lord Eustace.

I feel the force of Frampton's sentiments, and tremble at the thoughts of seeing Harriot; and yet, I cannot deny myself this last indulgence. If my father were acquainted with my distress, perhaps—O no! I must not think of that.—Cursed ambition! detested pride of family! that makes us sink the man to aggrandize the peer.

Enter ROBERT.

Rob. The ladies will wait on your lordship, immediately. [Exit.]

Lord Eust. I am glad the aunt comes with her—Her folly and impertinence will help to interrupt what I most dread, my Harriot's tenderness, and sensibility. She comes—I feel her superiority, and shrink to nothing.

Enter HARRIOT; she runs a few steps towards Lord Eustace, then stops suddenly, in confusion.

Lord Eust. My Harriot's first motion was, surely

natural, why then does she restrain the feelings of her heart? Have I been so unfortunate, as to deserve this coldness?

Enter Mrs. WINIFRED.

Lord *Eust.* I hope, madam, [*To Mrs. Winifred*] you will be so good as to excuse my absence, at the time of your arrival, and that you have found every thing in this house agreeable and convenient to you.

Mrs. *Win.* Ceremony, my lord, is quite unnecessary, among persons of rank and breeding; especially where they have the honour of being so close allied to your lordship. And I have great reason to believe, that every thing in your house, is, like your lordship, perfectly complete.

Lord *Eust.* You are very polite, madam; and if my Harriot knew what I had suffered——

Har. I might then have been more concerned than I am at present, and that, my lord, is needless.

Mrs. *Win.* I hop'd we should have had an end of your sighs, and your tears, when you saw Lord Eustace——I declare, child, you are a perfect Niobe!——One would imagine that you were the most unhappy creature in the world.

Lord *Eust.* You alarm me extremely, madam——Speak, my love, and tell me what affects you?

Har. Your lordship may remember with what great reluctance I consented to a private marriage.

Lord *Eust.* My Harriot's scruples cost me too many sighs ever to forget them.

Har. Yet your too powerful persuasions conquer'd them; and while you remained in Wales, your presence silenc'd my reflections, nor suffered even a painful thought to intrude into that heart which was ingrossed by you. What a delirium!

Lord Eust. May it last for ever!

Har. It fled with you, my lord——Left to myself, the offence I had committed against an absent father—the clandestine air which accompanied the awful ceremony——

Mrs. Win. Pray, niece, could that be avoided?

Har. The painful necessity of your absence——

Lord Eust. Let me, I entreat you, flatter myself, that my presence now may be sufficient to remove the anxiety my absence caused——What would I not do to make my Harriot happy! Command me; task my power.

Har. I would intreat, but not command, my lord.

Lord Eust. Then name the soft request, and think it granted.

Har. Since you permit, I wish you to employ that dear persuasive art, which you possess so amply, to reconcile my father to our marriage.

Lord Eust. You, madam, sure will join us, and assist in bringing about an event, which cannot longer be deferred, without injury to your honour and my peace.

Mrs. Win. I am his lordship's guarantee, that this treaty shall be kept secret, Harriot; and I shall preserve my promise as inviolably as if the peace of Eu-

rope were concerned. And to avoid the least infringement of the articles, I will prevent Sir William's surprizing you, in this state of altercation, and give you notice of the enemy's approach. [Exit.

Har. If ever I was dear to you, my lord, this is the time to prove it: remove the veil of mystery, which I blush to wear, and give that love, which is my highest boast, a sanction to the world.

Lord Eust. Never was man so embarrassed. [*Aside.*] I will obey my Harriot, though in opposition to my own judgement, which had determined me not to reveal the important secret to Sir William till our return into the country; lest the warmth of his resentment, for what he will stile an act of disobedience, might tempt him to discover our marriage to my father.

Har. Must it be ever kept a secret then? And must we always live thus separated?

Lord Eust. By no means—I can make a pretence to my father, of joining my regiment, and then can I retrace those paths that brought me first to Langwiltan; and the moment I arrive there, Sir William shall be made acquainted with my happiness.

Har. Do you mean to come there soon, my lord?

Lord Eust. I should have been there in a few days if you had not come to town.

Har. Why did you not tell me so? the least hint of your design would have prevented my coming to London.

Lord Eust. Does my Harriot think I would delay

my own happiness, by deferring an interview I so ardently desired, even for an hour?

Har. You can persuade me to any thing. I acquiesce in your determination.—There is but one thing more disturbs my mind, but that's a trifle.

Lord Eust. It cannot be so, in my estimation, if it affects you.—Let me know it.

Har. Where there is much sensibility, the heart is easily alarmed.—It has appeared extraordinary to me, that your lordship, in any of your letters to me, has never honoured me with the title of your wife.

Lord Eust. And can my Harriot blame me for such caution, meant to secure her happiness? If my fortunes only were at stake, I should now boast what I so much endeavour to conceal, nor fear the consequence of Lord Delville's resentment. The miscarriage, or interception of a letter, signed your husband, would precipitate the discovery of our marriage, and ruin me with my father.

Her. I would not have you suffer for my sake.

Lord Eust. It is only through you that I can suffer. Had my fortune been independent, I should, at once, have asked you of Sir William. Nay, situated as I am, I can forego all the advantages of wealth without regret, and, blest with you, only lament its loss for your dear sake. You weep, my Harriot! Let me kiss off those tears.

Har. No, let them flow, my lord—joy has its tears as well as grief, and these are tears of joy.

[Embracing him,

Lord *Eust.* My lovely softness !—How severely she distresses me !

[*Aside.*

Har. I will not trust this simple heart again, and blush to think it was so easily alarmed.

Enter Mrs. WINIFRED, in a hurry.

Mrs. Win. Softly, softly ! here comes my brother—have done with your love-prate—What, always a pouting, Harriot ?

Enter Sir WILLIAM, speaking to ROBERT.

Sir W. Give the coachman half-a-crown, and, do you hear, Robert, let there be springs put to our coach, every one has them now—Luxury ! luxury !—Every alderman and apothecary skims over this new-fangled pavement, without so much as a jolt. One of these city sparks would be shook to death, if he were to ride my Bay Bolton a fox chase.

Mrs. Win. My brother is always his own herald, and proclaims himself by the noise he makes—How detestably vulgar ! how unlike a man of fashion !—Here is Lord Eustace come to wait upon you, Sir William.

Sir W. I am glad to see your lordship, you have been a good while absent from quarters—but you young men of quality can have leave of absence when you please, I suppose ; and all you have to do, is to appear handsomely on a field day, or at a review. It was not so in my time—But discipline of every kind is relaxed now-a-days.

Lord *Eust.* I have been a truant, Sir William; but I mean to make up for lost time, and return immediately to my regiment, and then look to your partridges.

Sir *W.* You shall be welcome to my manor, my lord. How does my Harriot? I think you look pale. Do n't you think her altered, my lord?

Lord *Eust.* Rather improv'd, sir.

Sir *W.* She used to be remarkably lively: but as girls grow up, they affect gravity, in order to appear women before their time. Her brother and she are all I have left, and when Harriot is married——

Mrs. *Win.* Lord, Sir William, are you entering into family matters!

Sir *W.* Well, well, we won't talk of that now; but since we are upon the subject, I think I ought to congratulate your lordship.

Lord *Eust.* It must be then, Sir William, upon the happiness I at present enjoy in the company of these ladies.

Har. What does my father mean?

[*Aside.*]

Sir *W.* No, no, my lord, I meant to give you joy of your approaching marriage.

Har. Surely my ears deceive me!

[*Aside.*]

Lord *Eust.* You jest, Sir William!

Sir *W.* By no means, I assure you; I have it from undoubted authority.

Mrs. *Win.* Ridiculous!

Sir *W.* I tell you, sister, that it is in one of to-day's papers—I know what I read, sure.

Mrs. *Win.* Did it mention how things go in the Mediterranean? that is an article which concerns us more—we shall not have a port left us there soon.

Sir *W.* I speak only of domestic news, and mind no other. The paragraph I saw, ran thus—‘We hear ‘there is certainly a treaty of marriage on foot between ‘Lord Eustace, and Lady Anne Mountfort, which will ‘be concluded in a few days’——and then a great deal more, my lord, about both your accomplishments, which I have forgot.

Mrs. *Win.* I never knew any thing come of a *We hear*, yet. But I wish you had brought home the paper.

Lord *Eust.* Ha, ha, ha!——And is that your undoubted authority, Sir William? Why, at this season of the year, when occurrences are rare, the news writers couple half the nobility in England to fill up their papers——But, as there are no other papers filled up by the parties themselves, your marriages in print are not allowed good in law.

Mrs. *Win.* How can you be so easily disconcerted, child?

[*Aside to Harriot.*

Sir *W.* I think it highly insolent in them, my lord, to take these liberties without authority, as such reports may sometimes happen to be prejudicial to one party or the other.

Lord *Eust.* The freedom of the press, Sir William, though sometimes injurious to individuals, must never be restrained in this land of liberty. ‘Tis the very *Magna Charta* of freedom.

Mrs. *Win.* So it is, my lord.

Lord Eust. However, there have been some slight grounds for the report you mention.

Sir W. So I should imagine.

Lord Eust. Lady Anne's large fortune was rather a desirable object to my father—he did, therefore, propose my paying my addresses to her; but, upon my declaring that love should be my first motive in an engagement of that nature, and that my heart had never given me the least hint of her ladyship, he had the goodness to sacrifice his project to my happiness.—The affair had been whispered in our family, and even whispers have echoes, Sir William.

Sir W. Your lordship has taken more pains than was necessary, to explain this matter to us. For though you should not marry Lady Anne, it is to be supposed that you 'll soon marry a Lady Betty, or a Lady Mary, Somebody. Such an accomplished young nobleman will not be suffered to remain long single.

Mrs. Win. Lord, Sir William, how can you talk so oddly? There are many instances of persons who have lived single in spite of temptation and solicitation too, and that to your certain knowledge, I believe.

Sir W. You 'll pardon me, sister; I am really not acquainted with any of these coy, these sensitive plants.

Mrs. Win. You seem inclined to be witty, brother, and therefore I shall retire.

Lord Eust. I should oppose the severity of that resolution, madam, but that an engagement of business calls me away at this moment. May I hope for your permission to wait upon you frequently, while you stay in town?

Mrs. *Win.* Your lordship's visits must always be considered by us, both as an honour and an obligation.

Lord *Eust.* My sweet Harriot!—Ladies, your servant.—I hope we shall often meet, Sir William.—
[*Bows to Harriot.*] Nay, no ceremony.

Sir *W.* Your lordship must excuse me.

[*Exit Lord Eust. and Sir W.*]

Mrs. *Win.* With what nice delicacy and honour has my nephew explained away this idle report! But I am amazed, how you could be affected with it, child.

Har. Chide me as you please, I own I deserve it, for doubting the most amiable of men. Yet when my father hinted the subject, I should have fainted, if the tenderness of my lord's looks, even more than his words, had not convinced me of his love and truth.—Our fears are proportioned to our treasure; you cannot, therefore, condemn my apprehensions without lessening his worth.

Mrs. *Win.* That I shall never do. Persons of a certain rank in life are always worthy. But come, child, I am in a monstrous dilemma at present.

Har. What's the matter?

Mrs. *Win.* I want your assistance, to calculate the distance from Persia to America; for I have great apprehensions that the Sophy may join the Czarina, sail down the Baltic together, and strip us of all our settlements.

Har. Dear madam, how can you trouble yourself with things so foreign, either to your knowledge or interests?

Mrs. *Win.* I beg your pardon. Why, niece, now that you are married to my satisfaction, I know nothing in the domestic way worth being concerned for; and one's affections you know, child, cannot lie idle, therefore, I beg you will go immediately, and search for 'Salmon's Geography,' which I believe you will find in my trunk, along with 'Colins's Peerage,' which are books I never travel without; and which no person can pretend to keep company, without being thoroughly conversant in. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Sir WILLIAM and ROBERT.

Sir *W.* Pr'ythee, Robert, was that man in the hall my lord's valet de chambre? Of what use can he be to his master, here!

Rob. Of a great deal I fancy, sir. There are numbers of people come here after his lordship. A fine lady just now wanted to gain admittance; but Mr. Willis had dacity enough to make her disbelieve her own senses, and persuaded her that his master was down at Bristol, though she said her eyes saw him come into the house. O, these Londoners are cunning folks!

Sir *W.* You told me of another person that lives here, a gentleman, I think——

Rob. Yes, poor fellow, I believe he may be an honest man, because Willis don't seem much to like him. But it is hard to say which is good or bad amongst them.

Sir *W.* There is something very mysterious in all this [*Aside.*].—I desire, Robert, that you will have

as little communication as possible with his lordship's servants, and that you will prevent the rest of my family from having any also.

Rob. Your honour need not fear.—They are not kindly to any of us.

Sir W. I am glad of it.—Civility is the most dangerous mask of art.—My sister's folly in forcing us into this house, can only be equalled by my own, in submitting to come to it. But I will get out of it as fast as I can. [*Aside.*] I hope, Robert, to finish my business in a few days, and I shall not remain in London an hour after.

Rob. Your honour makes my heart glad.

Sir W. Do you know where Harriot is, Robert? I left her here just now.

Rob. I saw her go up stairs with Madam Winifred, as we came hither, sir. I think, with submission, our young lady likes London as little as either your worship or myself; she mopes mightily to be in the country again.

Sir W. She sha'n't mope long for that, Robert, nor when she is there neither, for I intend to settle her soon, both to her happiness and my own, by marrying her to Colonel Lloyd immediately. And when the wedding is over, and I am once more sat down safe at Langwillan, I shall think all my troubles are at an end. I'll go to Harriot, directly, and talk the matter over with her.

Rob. And I'll go and write the good news to my friends in Wales.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Mr. Frampton's Apartment. Enter Mr. FRAMPTON and WILLIS.

Fram. To barricade the doors, and deny admittance to their friends!

Wil. These were his lordship's orders, sir.—‘Willis (says he, with an arch look, which I understand pretty tolerably) you must be my Cerberus, and not suffer the devil himself to get through the key-hole, for a few days. But as soon as I am married, and gone off to the country your care will be needless.’ ‘Yes,’ says I to his lordship, ‘I will then make my escape out of the gulph, leave the doors open for all the devils to enter, and pursue your lordship to the Elysian fields.’

Fram. You are very poetical, Mr. Willis. But I fancy his lordship is rather over cautious, and that you will have no great employment for your extraordinary talents; for I don't think the family have any acquaintance in London.

Wil. More is the pity, for the girl is devilish handsome——It would be a good deed to bring her a little into life. I should like to have the introducing her.

Fram. Stop your licentious tongue! I have already told you, that this is no common affair. She is a young lady of unblemished character.

Wil. This is the old story, Mr. Frampton; I never knew a woman in my life who had not an unblemished character, till she lost it. This fellow is turned puri-

tan; he'll preach presently—But I hope his canting will not be able to corrupt my lord.—This would be no place for me then. I fancy he likes the girl himself.

[*Aside.*]

Fram. Believe me, Willis, Lord Eustace will find it a very difficult matter to get clear of this unhappy adventure. Sir William is a man of sense and spirit, and the young lady has, besides, a brother in the army, who is esteemed a brave young man.

Wil. As to Don Pedro, the father, I think my lord had better get Commodore Lloyd, to take a short walk with him upon the quarter-deck; and as to the young Spaniard, his Lordship can't well refuse to take a bout of tilting with him, if he should insist upon it. But I have been pretty well used to things of this sort, as you know, Mr. Frampton; and I never yet knew a wounded reputation cured by a sword or a pistol—Perhaps they may think as I do, and so let the matter rest in peace.

Fram. I should imagine their sentiments to be very different from yours upon this occasion. But, pray, who is this Captain Lloyd, that you talk of, for Sir William's antagonist?

Wil. There I was out a little—I forgot his being a Welchman, and a particular friend of the Ap Evans's.

Fram. But how came he connected with Lord Eustace?

Wil. They were acquainted before the captain went to sea, and a jolly buck he was. But he has now lost his ship; and, to solicit another, he is as constant at

Lord Delville's levee as an old maid at her parish church. The simile holds farther too; for his head is cast in so peculiar a mould, that he believes every thing he hears, and repeats it as a matter of fact.

Fram. What an infinite deal of falsehood must this honest man utter in the course of a summer's day!

Wil. I will save his poor conscience, for this one day at least, by keeping him out of our fortress.

Fram. It will be more necessary for your purpose to prevent his telling truth at present, I imagine.

Will. Your honour knows it is not to be spoken at all times. He has told a thousand for my master himself. [*Aside.*] [*Knocking at the door.*] I must fly to my post, sir. [*Exit.*]

Fram. A fit one for such an office! It is such wretches as these that corrupt us all; that clear the thorny paths of vice, and strew them o'er with roses. These agents for perdition can remove mountains that obstruct our passage, till we are sunk in the abyss of guilt, and then their weight falls on us! I would willingly persuade myself that Lord Eustace is not so far gone in baseness as to conclude his marriage with Lady Anne, and desert this amiable unfortunate. Yet can I not, at present, foresee how it may be possible for him to avoid it. There is some time, however, to think about it. I'll seek him out directly, and try how his heart beats after his interview with Harriot.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

Sir William's Apartment. Sir WILLIAM and HARRIOT discovered.

Sir *W.* I am sorry to find you so cold upon this subject, Harriot. But I flatter myself when you come to know the colonel, you will have no objections to him. Believe me, my child, he is the only man, I know, deserving of an heart like yours, untainted with the follies or vices of the world, and unsullied with the image of any other man.

Har. This is too much ; I cannot bear it. [*Aside.*]

—Sir. —

Enter ROBERT.

Rob. Captain Lloyd is come to wait upon your honour.

Sir *W.* Desire him to walk in. And do ye hear, Robert ? [*They walk aside.*]

Har. To be obliged to compound with my duty !—Ashamed to look my father in the face ! To blush at his confidence, and be humbled by his kindness ! To feel the irksomeness of receiving praise which I am conscious I do not merit ! What a state for an ingenuous mind ! [*Exit Robert.*]

Enter at opposite doors, Mrs. WINIFRED and Captain LLOYD.

Mrs. *Win.* O heavens, that monster here !—But 't is impossible now to escape. [*Aside,*

Capt. Good morrow, my good friend. Fair ladies your servant.

Sir W. I am extremely glad to see you, captain.

Capt. Why so I thought you would be, baronet, or I should not have been here; and yet it has not been without some difficulty that we are met. I fancied just now that I should have been obliged to tack about without seeing you.

Sir W. I don't understand you, captain.

Capt. Why, to say the truth, Sir William, I don't rightly comprehend it myself; but one of your lazy hall furniture—the most obstinate puppy! I have seen him before, though I can't now recollect where, took it into his head to deny me admittance, and if old Robert had not come to the door, and cleared the deck of this fellow, I should have sheer'd off directly.

Sir W. What can this mean! Was it your orders, sister, that we should be denied?

Mrs. Win. As our arrival in town has not yet been announced to any one, I did not expect visitors so soon; and, therefore, gave no orders about the matter—Though I wish to keep him and all his family out of the house. *[Aside.]*

Sir W. There is something very extraordinary in this proceeding. *[Aside.]*

Capt. Since the wind sits so, I am glad I came aboard you; I should not choose to run foul of a lady's orders, especially any that belong to you.

Sir W. You seem to have forgot these ladies, captain; this is my sister, and this will soon be your niece, I hope.

Capt. They are both much altered since last I saw them—for one is grown a young woman and the other an old one.

Mrs. Win. You are not grown a brute, for you always were one.

Sir W. Have a care, captain, you are very near splitting on a rock.

Capt. Not at all—time brings every vessel into port, at last, that does not founder—But, faith, my nephew has had an excellent look out; I could almost envy him such a station. A fine full sail, truly!—Well, prosperous gales attend their voyage! But where is Harry? I expected to have seen him here.

Sir W. Whom do you speak of, captain?

Capt. Why, of your son, the young colonel. I met him yesterday in the Park, not in his regimentals though; for he told me he was a little *incog* at present, and had even changed his name, for fear of being known. I think it was Weston he called himself—as he had quitted quarters without leave of absence, and at the hazard of losing his commission.

Sir W. And he deserves it—What can have brought him here?

Har. I rejoice at the thoughts of seeing him; does he look well, good captain?

Mrs. Win. Do you know where my nephew lodges, sir?

Capt. I should have as many tongues as there are swivels on the quarter-deck, to answer such a broadside of questions; but one at a time, I beseech you.—

As to you, madam, I answer no; and to you, fair lady, yes; and as to you, Sir William, I think one need not have doubled the Cape to be able to find out his errand hither. A fair woman and a fair wind certainly brought him from Ireland.

Sir *W.* Rash, inconsiderate boy!

Capt. That may not be quite the case, neither, Sir William. But I should not have mentioned this matter to you, if I had not thought it had been all above-board between him and you, for Harry was never kept under hatches, I know.—But never fear, man, keep a stout heart, and I warrant you he shall weather it; he shall not lose his commission.

Mrs. *Win.* I fancy, sir, it may require the interest of a person of rather more consequence than you to preserve it. But there are those who are ready to interest themselves for any one who belongs to my family; the Ap Evans's are neither unknown, nor unallied to the nobility.

Capt. As to that, madam, I should think the Lloyds——

Sir *W.* For shame! for shame!—Can you, who are a man, be infected with this folly?

Capt. Why, 't is not right, or becoming a man of war to attack a frigate, to be sure. But the Lloyds, Sir William——

Sir *W.* Psha!

Mrs. *Win.* Pray, brother, let the gentleman value himself upon what he pleases; but 't is rather unlucky that a person of his weight and importance should not

be able to inform us where my nephew lodges, as that is the only thing in which the captain could be any way serviceable to us.

Capt. Not so fast, Miss Winifred, if you please; there are many people in this town who are apt to make offer of their services, without either will or power to be of the least use to us. Now, if you will tell me, madam, who those people are that you reckon upon, I shall be better able to judge of your interest with the great.

Mrs. Win. What do you think of Lord Eustace?—Did you ever hear of him, captain?

Capt. I suppose I may; why, he is one of my most intimate friends, madam, and I'll speak to him about the business directly.

Mrs. Win. Pray now, good captain, spare yourself that trouble, for he is one of *my most intimate friends* also. It is he who has been so obliging to lend us this house, while we stay in London.

Capt. I do remember this place now as well as my own cabin—but the impertinence of that footman, whom I now recollect to be his, put it out of my head. Yes, my lord and I have had some jovial parties here.

Sir W. What, in this identical house?

Capt. Why aye—this used to be the place of rendezvous—But those days must be all over with him, now that he is going to be married.

Mrs. Win. and Har. How! married!

Capt. Yes—the ceremony is to be performed immediately; he'll soon be in the bilboes.—But you seem

surprized—'T is odd enough, truly, that he has not mentioned it to you, Miss Winifred, in particular, who are one of his *most intimate friends*. When did you see him, pray?

Mrs. *Win.* What! again alarmed at the same story?

[*Aside to Harriot.*

Sir *W.* He was here this morning, and I knew it was so then, though my sister chose not to believe it.

Mrs. *Win.* Nor do I now.—But pray, Mr. *Intelligence Extraordinary*, to whom is Lord Eustace to be married?

Capt. Why really, madam, it is no extraordinary intelligence that he is to marry Lady Anne Mountfort, for it is just as public as the arrival of a king's ship in the Downs, or an Indiaman at Blackwall. The newspapers tell these things, and every one in London knows them.

Har. Gracious heaven! Where shall I hide my head?

[*Aside.*

Mrs. *Win.* We have heard this choice account before, sir; but though I have as implicit a faith in the veracity of the public prints as any person can have, I would, however, stake my life on't that this is a falsehood.

Capt. You are not serious, madam? But if you choose to deny the fact, I have nothing further to say about it.

Sir *W.* It is very odd that Lord Eustace should disown it to me, and yet 't is certain that he did so.

Capt. That may be possible; but I, who am every

day at his father's, and have seen the liveries, equipage, and jewels brought home for the wedding, cannot easily be persuaded, that all this rigging should be prepared before there is a bottom on the stocks for it.

Har. 'Tis too true! Undone, unhappy Harriot!

[*Aside to Mrs. Winifred.*]

Sir W. What think you now, sister?

Mrs. Win. That the captain has dreamed all he has said, or may be, perhaps, infected with a calen- ture; for I think I have very good reason to know, that Lord Eustace is otherways engaged.

Capt. Aye, aye, engaged to be sure; say rather that he has taken another frigate in tow to add to his squadron; I know the man pretty well. I now recollect my having heard, some time ago, that he had an attachment to a pretty country girl. He was a long time absent from London.

Mrs. Win. A country girl, truly!

Sir W. Some poor simple creature, I suppose, who had youth and beauty enough to attract his inclinations, but neither sense or virtue sufficient to preserve herself or them.

Capt. This is probably the real truth of the matter.

Sir W. Though I lament the unhappy victims of their own folly, I cannot say that I am sorry such adventures happen sometimes, as these examples may possibly have their effect, in abating the presumption of young women, who are often too apt to fancy themselves much wiser than their fathers and mothers.

Har. I can no longer sustain the agonies I suffer!

[*Aside. Faints.*]

Sir W. My Harriot! my dear child! what's the matter?

Har. I am suddenly taken ill; I hope you'll excuse me, sir.

Mrs. Win. Was there ever any thing so absurd?—Let us retire, my dear, and leave these wonder-making gentlemen to compose some other marvelous anecdotes.

[*Exit Mrs. Win. and Har.*]

Sir W. I am extremely alarmed. [*Aside.*] You'll be so good as to excuse my staying longer with you, captain, at present. Harriot's illness distresses me extremely.

Capt. Doubtless, Sir William.—I will now go and give chase to the colonel, and if I can hail him, shall pilot him hither.

Sir W. I shall be much obliged to you.

Capt. But you must not play old square-toes upon us, baronet. Remember you were once as young, and I'll warrant as frolicsome too as any of us. Your servant, your servant, Sir William.

[*Exit.*]

Sir W. There is something very singular in this affair of Lord Eustace. My sister's absurdity in denying the fact I can account for, from the peculiar obstinacy of her character. But why should Harriot be affected with it? Her aunt's folly may have operated there also; perhaps persuaded her, that his lordship's common address of gallantry and politeness, was a professed declaration of passion for her. But this

marriage will soon put an end to such illusion, and restore my child to her sense and duty again. I will, therefore, go now and sooth, not wound her mind with my surmises.—The foibles of youth should be rather counteracted than opposed, lest, in endeavouring to weed them out, we may destroy a kindred virtue. [Exit.]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Frampton's Apartment. Enter FRAMPTON.

Frampton.

[It was unlucky I could not meet with Lord Eustace. I perceive I am more anxious about this affair than he appears to be. Youth and dissipation buoy him up against those consequences, which I cannot help foreseeing.]

Enter WILLIS, with a parcel of letters.

Wil. Here they are, sir; and if you knew what pains and address it cost me to get them into my hands, you would say, 'Willis, you deserve to be rewarded.'

Fram. With a halter.

[*Aside.*

Wil. I was forced to swear to the fellow who brought them, that I was Sir William's own servant; and as the devil would have it, he was a Monmouth-

shire lad, waiter at Serle's Coffee-house, and had come on purpose to ask a thousand impertinent questions about Gillian and John, James and Mary Le-wellins, Ap Griffiths, Ap Owens, and the Lord knows who. Then my terrors about Robert surprizing us--- but luckily he was out of the way; so I carried the lad to a beer-house, killed one half of his kindred, and married the other, without knowing one of the parties.

Fram. What an ingenious rascal! [*Aside.*] You have acquitted yourself of your commission very well. Leave the letters.

Wil. I hope, sir, you honour will be so kind to let my lord know the pains I have taken for his service, since you do n't choose to take any notice of it yourself.—Industry should be rewarded, Mr. Frampton. You used to be generous, sir; but——

Fram. How the fellow wounds me! [*Aside.*] Your services will be repaid; you have no cause to doubt of your lord's generosity.

Wil. No, really, sir——If you don't prevent it. [*Aside.*] I fancy, now, I could guess pretty nearly to the contents of these epistles. I wish I could keep them in my possession, 'till I gave them to my lord, and then I should be sure of being paid the postage. [*Aside.*] Let's see—To Sir William Evans, baronet; the post-mark, Monmouth; this probably comes from his steward, and may possibly contain an account of a strayed sheep, or a cur hanged.—This, to the same, from Ireland; from his son, I presume, the young

hero you talked of, about fighting my master—but I think we are pretty safe, while he's at that distance.

Fram. I hope he may remain there, 'till this unhappy business is over.

Wil. To Mrs. Winifred Evans; post-mark, Hereford; 't is Langwood's hand—This must be the letter of letters.—Am I right, sir?

Fram. Pr'ythee leave them and your impertinence. You have no right to pry into their secrets.

Wil. I ask pardon, sir; I have been trusted with a great many secrets, before now, and I believe your honour knows I never betrayed them.—And, though I am not a gentleman, sir, I believe my lord will give me the character of being faithful to him; he never had any cause to repent his confidence in me—Whatever he may— [Aside.

Fram. Leave the room this moment, lest I should be tempted to forget myself, and chastize your insolence as it deserves.

Wil. I wish I had the letters again, and the devil should have them, before that sneaking puppy. [Aside. [Exit.

Fram. What a mean light do I appear in, at this moment, to myself! Involved in an infamous confidence, with an insolent footman! Let me keep clear of the looking-glass, that I may not be shocked at my own features.—And can I persist in an action that the least remains of honour or conscience must revolt against? No, let beggary, rather than infamy, be my portion. My indiscretions have deserved the first,

but let not the baseness of my conduct ever set a seal to the last. I will go and deliver them instantly to Sir William.

As he is going out, Enter Lord EUSTACE.

Lord *Eust.* Well, my dear Frampton, have you secured the letters?

Fram. Yes, my lord, for their rightful owners.

Lord *Eust.* As to the matter of property, Frampton, we wo'n't dispute much about that. Necessity, you know, may sometimes render a trespass excusable.

Fram. I am not casuist sufficient to answer you upon that subject; but this I know, that you have already trespassed against the laws of hospitality and honour, in your conduct towards Sir William Evans and his daughter. And as your friend and counsellor both, I would advise you to think seriously of repairing the injuries you have committed, and not increase your offence by a farther violation.

Lord *Eust.* 'Tis actually a pity you were not bred to the bar, Ned: but I have only a moment to stay, and am all impatience to know, if there be a letter from Langwood, and what he says.

Fram. I shall never be able to afford you the least information upon that subject, my lord.

Lord *Eust.* Surely, I don't understand you.---You said you had secured the letters---Have you not read them?

Fram. You have a right, and none but you, to ask me such a question.---My weak compliance with your

first proposal, relative to these letters, warrants your thinking so meanly of me.—But know, my lord, that though my personal affection for you, joined to my unhappy circumstances, may have betrayed me to actions unworthy of myself, I never can forget that there is a barrier, fixed before the extreme of baseness, which honour will not let me pass.

Lord Eust. You'll give me leave to tell you, Mr. Frampton, that where I lead, I think you need not halt.

Fram. You'll pardon me, my lord; the consciousness of another man's errors can never be a justification for our own—and poor, indeed, must that wretch be, who can be satisfied, with the negative merit, of not being the worst man he knows.

Lord Eust. If this discourse were uttered in a conventicle, it might have its effect, by setting the congregation to sleep.

Fram. It is rather meant to rouze, than lull your lordship.

Lord Eust. No matter what it is meant for; give me the letters, Mr. Frampton.

Fram. Yet, excuse me——By Heaven, I could as soon think of arming a madman's hand, against my own life, as suffer you to be guilty of a crime that will for ever wound your honour.

Lord Eust. I shall not come to you to heal the wound: your medicines are too rough and coarse for me.

Fram. The soft poison of flattery might, perhaps, please you better.

Lord Eust. Your conscience may, probably, have as much need of palliatives as mine, Mr. Frampton; as I am pretty well convinced, that your course of life, has not been more regular than my own.

Fram. With true contrition, my lord, I confess part of your sarcasm to be just. Pleasure was the object of my pursuit, and pleasure I obtained, at the expence both of health and fortune---but yet, my lord, I broke not in upon the peace of others; the laws of hospitality, I never violated; nor did I ever seek to injure or seduce the wife or daughter of my friend.

Lord Eust. I care not what you did; give me the letters.

Fram. I have no right to keep, and therefore shall surrender them, though with the utmost reluctance; but by your former friendship I intreat you not to open them.

Lord Eust. That you have forfeited.

Fram. Since it is not in my power to prevent your committing an error, which you ought for ever to repent of, I will not be a witness of it—There are the letters. [*Lays them on the table.*]

Lord Eust. You may, perhaps, have cause to repent your present conduct, Mr. Frampton, as much as I do our past attachment.

Fram. Rather than hold your friendship upon such terms, I resign it for ever.——Farewell, my lord.

[*Exit.* sooner

Lord Eustace takes up the letters; WILLIS appears at the side of the Scene.

Wil. I am glad they have quarrelled, I shall have my lord all to myself now. [*Aside.*]

Lord Eust. I have been to blame—but yet 'twas cruel in him to distress me, when he knows the difficulties of my situation—he has shocked me so extremely, I find it impossible to touch the letters.

Wil. Then we are all ruined, and I shall never be paid for the carriage. [*Aside.*]

Lord Eust. Yet if Langwood's letter should fall into their hands I must be undone.

Wil. In order to strengthen his lordship's conscience, I'll make my appearance. [*Aside.*] [*Willis comes forward.*] I hope Mr. Frampton has given your lordship the letters I took so much pains to get for you-----there is one from Langwood to Mrs. Winifred-----

Re-enter Mr. FRAMPTON.

—The devil! he here again! there is no doing any business with these half gentlemen. [*Aside.*]

Fram. My lord!

Lord Eust. Mr. Frampton!---Leave us, Willis.

Wil. So, I have lost my labour. [*Aside.*] [*Exit.*]

Fram. Ill treated as I have been, my lord, I find it impossible to leave you surrounded by difficulties.

Lord Eust. That sentiment should have operated sooner, Mr. Frampton—recollection is seldom of use

to our friends, though it may sometimes be serviceable to ourselves.

Fram. Take advantage of your own expression, my lord, and recollect yourself -- Born and educated as I have been, a gentleman, how have you injured both yourself and me, by admitting and uniting, in the same confidence, your rascal servant?

Lord Eust. The exigency of my situation is a sufficient excuse to myself, and ought to have been so to the man who *called* himself my friend.

Fram. Have a care, my lord, of uttering the least doubt upon that subject; for could I think you once mean enough to suspect the sincerity of my attachment to you, it must vanish at that instant.

Lord Eust. The proofs of your regard have been rather painful of late, Mr. Frampton.

Fram. When I see my friend upon the verge of a precipice, is that a time for compliment? Shall I not rudely rush forward, and drag him from it? Just in that state you are at present, and I will strive to save you. -- Virtue may languish in a noble heart, and suffer her rival, vice, to usurp her power; but baseness must not enter, or she flies for ever --- The man who has forfeited his own esteem, thinks all the world has the same consciousness, and therefore is, what he deserves to be, a wretch.

Lord Eust. Oh, Frampton! you have lodged a dagger in my heart.

Fram. No, my dear Eustace, I have saved you from one, from your own reproaches, by preventing your

being guilty of a meanness, which you could never have forgiven yourself.

Lord *Eust.* Can you forgive me, and be still my friend?

Fram. As firmly as I have ever been, my lord.

Lord *Eust.* You are, indeed, my best, my truest friend. [*Embracing him.*] But yet, I fear you will despise me, Frampton---You never loved to that excess that I do, and therefore cannot pardon the madness of that passion which would destroy its dearest object.

Fram. We must not judge of the strength of our passions, by the miseries they bring on others, but rather by the means we use to save them from distress---But let us at present hasten to get rid of the mean business we are engaged in, and forward the letters we have no right to detain.

Lord *Eust.* Here, take them; do what you will with them: I will be guided by you---Yet this affair of Langwood's letter---

Fram. Will make dreadful confusion. my lord---Let me think a little---I have it---Suppose we delay the delivery of it for a few days; something may happen in that time that may save the unhappy Harriot the pain of such a discovery.

Lord *Eust.* Though I have little hopes on that account, yet would I not precipitate her wretchedness: it was to save her from it, Frampton, that first induced me---

Fram. Talk no more of it, my lord---Mr. Willis---

Enter WILLIS.

Wil. So they are friends again, I see. [*Aside.*]—
Did your honour call, Mr. Frampton?

Fram. Take these letters and give them to Sir William's servant, to be delivered immediately.

Wil. What, all of them, my lord?

Fram. No, this one must be kept back. Lock it up carefully, 'till I call for it.

Lord *Eust.* Come, my dear Frampton, I have a thousand obligations to you, and a thousand things to speak to you about. [*Exeunt Ld. Eust. & Fram.*]

Wil. My dear Frampton!—There's a fellow for you, that, without half a crown in his pocket, talks as much stuff about honour, and such nonsense, as if he were a duke---They have not broke the seal, I find; that's Frampton's fault: if he had not returned the instant he did, I would have satisfied my lord's curiosity, and my own---Well, cannot I do so now? A good servant should prevent his master's wishes---My lord, I am sure, would be glad to know the contents; egad, and so should I too---but how shall I come at 'em?---This cursed seal [*flirts it with his finger.*] Zounds, what have I done?---what an accident! why, the letter's open!---Why, if it is, one may read it without offence---So, by your leave, good Mrs. Winifred---[*Reads.*] 'Madam, as I am sensible the 'dreadful moment now approaches, when I must render an account of all my actions.' A steward's account will be tolerably long, I suppose. [*Continues*]

reading.] 'I wish, even by this late confession, to atone for the crime I have been guilty of, in aiding Lord Eustace to impose upon your niece by a feigned marriage.'---The devil! This is a confession, indeed! for which, like all other mean-spirited, whimpering rascals, he deserves to be hanged. My lord was in the right to look sharp after this business---We must have been blown up, if it had come to light. But as I hope to be well paid for the contents of this, I may let the others go free. [Exit.

SCENE II.

Changes to Sir William Evans's Apartment, HARRIOT, seated on a Couch, leaning on her Arm.

Har. I cannot pierce through the mystery in which I am involved. I strive in vain to recover confidence in Lord Eustace. These fatal reports unhinge my very soul.---Yet nothing can abate my love. One false step has involved me in a thousand difficulties. I can endure my situation no longer; and let the consequence be what it may, I will reveal the secret to my father. But then my lord's intreaties, and my aunt's commands---why, even they must be sacrificed to filial duty.---Wretch that I am, how did I dare to break that first of moral ties!---Heavens! he is here!

Enter Sir WILLIAM EVANS, with a letter in his hand.

Sir W. I have just received a letter from your bro-

ther, Harriot, which I should have had, ten days ago, had I been at home.

Har. Does he assign a cause for coming to London, sir?

Sir W. Yes, yes, 'tis as Lloyd guessed, an affair of gallantry, but an honourable business though—I long 'till ye are both married, that I may hear no more of romances. I hope when Harry has led the way, you will have no objection to follow him.

Har. What shall I say to him? [*Aside.*

Sir W. I wish I knew who my future daughter-in-law is to be. Harry tells me she has a great fortune; but that, I suppose, is a sweetener—But if she has worth and virtue sufficient to make him happy, I shall be content.—But what's the matter, Harriot? I thought your illness was quite gone off—you look as if you had been weeping—My sister, I suppose.—

Har. No, sir; indeed her goodness to me, as well as yours, is graven upon my heart,

Sir W. She is a very odd woman-----She would fain persuade me that I distressed you, by jesting with Captain Lloyd about Lord Eustace's mistress—I begin to think that she is in love with him herself--Of what consequence are his gallantries to her? I dare say he has had a hundred of the same sort; and that the lady, to whom he is now going to offer his hand, can have but a very small remnant of his heart.

Har. I have heard him say, sir, they should never be divided.

Sir W. Fine talking for a libertine, truly!--How-

ever, I agree with you that it is not right to make a jest of those unfortunate women he may have ruined
 ...And I commend your delicacy upon this occasion, as I well know it is the result of the most amiable female virtues, modesty and compassion.

Har. O, sir! [Rises.]

Sir W. What ails my child?

Har. [Falls at his feet.] My father!

Sir W. What is the matter? You amaze me, Harriot!

Har. I am——

Sir W. What?

Har. You see before you, sir——

Sir W. Don't distract me! Whom do I see?

Har. I am---Lord Eustace---my father!——

Sir W. Speak; go on---Lord Eustace!---What of him?

Har. I am his wife!——

Sir W. What—Lord Eustace's wife!—Then you are a wretch, indeed!

Har. Yet pardon me, sir!

Sir W. I cannot pardon you, Harriot—you have undone yourself.

Har. O, do not say so, sir, when it is in your power to make me happy.

Sir W. I would it were—but there is very little prospect of happiness for a virtuous woman, who is connected with a libertine.

Har. I hope, sir, you have mistaken his character; and when you know him better, I am sure you will be sorry——

Sir W. It is you, child, that I fear will have cause to be sorry, for having mistaken his character—young women are but bad judges of their lovers morals.

Har. My aunt, sir——

Sir W. Aye, aye, she, I suppose, was privy to the match; he is a lord, and that's enough for her. I might have expected such a stroke from her intolerable vanity—But how have I been deceived, in my opinion, both of your duty and affection to me!

Har. My future conduct, sir, shall prove them both.

Sir W. O, Harriot! What a disappointment is mine? I hoped to have seen you united to a man of sense and worth, who would have respected as well as loved you—Instead of that, you are now joined to one, who, from his too intimate knowledge of the vicious part of your sex, is likely to despise them all.

Har. I flatter myself, sir, that the goodness, both of his heart, and understanding, will make him readily renounce any light errors he may have fallen into.

Sir W. I wish it most sincerely—but——

Har. Do not, sir, injure him, by doubting it.

Sir W. I fear, my child, you flatter yourself in vain, with any change in your husband's conduct—that last amour, which Captain Lloyd spoke of——

Har. How blest am I, to be able to acquit my lord!—Though blushing I avow it, it was his mysterious attachment to his wife, that caused that vile report.—O, sir! let me again, upon my knees, entreat you to pardon what is past, and give Lord Eustace leave

to prove the sincerity of his affection to me, by his respectful tenderness and gratitude towards you.

Sir *W.* Rise, rise, my Harriot. Since it is so—I forgive, and bless you. [Embraces her.]

Har. You have made your daughter happy—how will Lord Eustace be transported!

Sir *W.* Would I could see occasion for this joy! [Aside.]—Retire, my child; compose your spirits, and let me compose mine.—I wish to be alone.

Har. It is almost impossible, sir!—I am too, too happy! [Exit.]

Sir *W.* Why was this marriage huddled in the dark? It shall not be kept secret—Mystery is the fit mask for vice; my daughter needs it not—I am impatient till I see Lord Eustace.

Enter ROBERT.

Rob. It is not long, sir, since he went from hence.

Sir *W.* No matter; leave me, Robert.

Rob. If your honour would hear a few words that I have to say.—

Sir *W.* I cannot hear you now; my thoughts are all engaged.—I must write to Colonel Lloyd directly.—I shall have a sad piece of work with the old gentlemen at Trevallin—he doats upon my girl as if she were his own child.—

Rob. Aye, sir, and so does every one who knows her, except some of the folks in this house.—I wish, indeed I do, that we were fairly out of it.

Sir *W.* Well, we shall leave it soon—but for the present, Robert—

Rob. Your honour little knows what's going forward in it---such quarrelling, such high words! aye, and such fine words too, as I never heard before; though, if I understand them right, they have but a black meaning.

Sir W. Robert, we'll talk of this, some other time. ---I say again, I am not at leisure now. ---

Rob. I can't be easy, 'till I tell you, sir; as I am sadly afraid there is something a plotting against your honour, or my young mistress. ---I have heard that wicked Willis talking of her to his fellow servant. ---O, sir, that fellow knows all his lord's secrets; he is at the beginning, and ending of all mischief; and he says as how Miss Harriot has been only imposed upon. [*Sir Wil. starts.*] ---Yes, sir, imposed upon---and that his master will be married to a fine lady in less than a month's time. ---

Sir W. How! imposed upon! What can this mean? Lord Eustace dare not think of any thing so base. ---I injure both myself and him by the suspicion.

Rob. All I know of the matter is, sir, that the gentleman that lives here (whom I believe to be a very honest man, though Willis calls him a poor rogue) and my Lord Eustace had a sad quarrel, and they talked so loud, that I could not help overhearing Mr. Frampton---for I scorn to listen---reproaching my lord with having behaved very ill both to you and your daughter---but they were friends afterwards, and went out together. -----But Willis said a great deal more to James, my lord's footman, to the same sense

---and whatever mischief there is a brewing, I am sure he knows all about it.

Sir *W.* I cannot comprehend the meaning of all this.
 ---Imposed upon!---I will be satisfied---His scoundrel servant talk of my daughter, and of his marriage with another lady!---I have not patience to wait the meeting with Lord Eustace---Is that fellow in the house? That Willis, Robert?

Rob. Yes, sir, James and he have been taking a hearty glass, I believe; he looks pure and merry.

Sir *W.* Bid him come to me directly.

Rob. I am afraid he will be too cunning, for your worship.

Sir *W.* Do as I bid you.

Rob. I will, sir.

[Exit Robert.]

Sir *W.* The happiness or misery of my child, seem now suspended in an equal balance.---Let my impatience to turn the scale in her favour, excuse me to myself, for condescending to enquire into another's secrets, though they so nearly concern me.

Enter WILLIS.

Wil. Your valet de chambre told me, sir, that you desired to speak with me.

Sir *W.* Our conversation will be but short, Mr. Willis.

[He shuts the door.]

Wil. I am in a rare humour to bam this Welsh Baronet.

[Aside.]

Sir *W.* I say our conversation will be but short, Mr. Willis; but I should wish it to be sincere,

Wil. There he has hit the mark. [*Aside.*—O, to be sure, sir! I have been remarkable for truth and sincerity all my life, sir. My mother taught me, from a child, never to tell a lie.

Sir W. Truth is certainly the foundation of every other virtue, and I hope I may depend upon yours, to answer a few questions that I shall ask you.

Wil. O yes, you may depend upon me.—What the devil is he about! He is certainly going to hear me my catechism. [*Aside.*

Sir W. I shall think myself obliged to you, if you will acquaint me with what you know, in relation to Lord Eustace's marriage.

Wil. Me, sir! How is it possible I can tell?—All's out, I suppose—O, that cursed Langwood! [*Aside.*

Sir W. No trifling with me, friend; I will be answered.

Wil. Yes, to be sure, sir, all servants ought to give civil answers to gentlemen; but really, sir, I cannot possibly tell you any thing about it.

Sir W. Since fair means will not prevail upon you, this shall extort the truth. [*Draws his sword.*

Wil. For Heaven's sake, sir, don't terrify an evidence, in this land of liberty—You will either frighten what I do know out of my head, or make me confess something without knowing any thing at all of the matter.

Sir W. No prevarication, sir——Men like you, who are bred up in vice and idleness, are to be influenced by nothing but their fears---Therefore tell me, I say again, what you know of this marriage?

Wil. Yes, yes, they have had another letter from Langwood; so I may as well make a merit of giving up ours, since there can be none in keeping it from him. [*Aside.*]

Sir W. What are you muttering, villain? Don't urge me farther; I have lost my reason, and will not answer for the consequences.

Wil. I will do any thing, sir, if you will be pleased to drop the point of that ugly piece of cold iron.—What you have heard from Langwood is most certainly true. But a good servant, you know, sir, ought to keep his master's secrets, till his life is in danger.

Sir W. Langwood!—Master's secrets!—---Explain yourself this moment.

Wil. Dear sir, be patient---What need you have the trouble of hearing it over again, when you know it all already?

Sir W. Dare you again insult me with your trifling!

Wil. Why really, sir, I can't say it was a right thing of my lord, but none of his servants were in fault, except Langwood; we must do what our masters bid us; and he, poor devil, is sorry enough, as you know, sir, and may see, sir. [*Takes the letter out of his pocket, Sir William snatches it.*]

Sir W. Langwood, again!—Who is Langwood? And what has he to do with your lord's marriage? And what is this letter?

Wil. It is for Mrs. Winifred, sir; and as to Langwood, he was the mock-doctor, the counterfeit parson, that married my lord; I was only the clerk, indeed,

sir; and I hope your honour will be so good to forgive me, and not leave all the sin and the shame too, upon my poor conscience.

Sir *W.* Why, villain! rascal! what is all this stuff? If your lord be married to my daughter, how dare he think of any other wife?

Wil. So, I have made a fine piece of work on 't! I find he did not know it was a sham marriage, till now. —[*Aside.*] Why, really, sir, you terrify me so, that I don't rightly understand you; I thought you knew all about it, before I opened my lips to you.

Sir *W.* I asked you, wretch, about your lord's intended marriage.

Wil. O lord, sir, it was very unlucky I did not understand you. I shall be obliged to fly my country; my lord will never let me live in England after this. I shall lose an excellent place, sir.

Sir *W.* Begone, thou profligate! Fly from my sight this moment.

Wil. I am an undone scoundrel, that 's the truth of it!—But this comes of muddling in a morning—Had I been sober, I should have been an over-match for his worship, or any justice of peace in England. I'll e'en retire, till my master and this Welch family have so reconciled matters between themselves, that a gentleman may be able to live with some satisfaction amongst them. [*Aside.*] [*Exit*]

[*Sir William reading the letter*]

Sir *W.* What am I now to think! My child is dishonoured! Let me contain my rage a moment longer

and be yet more fully satisfied, from their own lips.—
Robert!

Enter ROBERT.

Go, call my sister, and---I cannot name her.

Rob. Miss Harriot, sir?

Sir W. Aye, bid them come hither.

Rob. I never saw my master so disturbed before.

[*Aside.*] [Exit Robert.]

Sir W. Of what can they inform me? Do I not know my daughter is undone?

Enter Mrs. WINIFRED and HARRIOT.

Mrs. Win. Pray, my lady, go first.

Sir W. Where are these wretched, these unhappy women, that have brought shame and sorrow on themselves, and infamy on me?

Mrs. Win. Hey day! What's the matter now? Harriot told me she had just left you in a heavenly temper; what can have happened to discompose you since; but *Much Ado about Nothing* is your play, from morning 'till night.

Sir W. Read that.

[*Gives her a letter.*]

Mrs. Win. A broken seal!—What can be the contents?

Har. Dear sir, what is the matter?

Sir W. Do not talk to me, unhappy girl! Lord Eustace has deceived you—you are not his wife.

Har. All gracious Heaven! [*Sinks upon a couch.*]

Sir *W.* Rage and madness! O women, women, what have ye done!

Mrs. *Win.* Vastly well, I think.

Sir *W.* Do not provoke me.

Mrs. *Win.* You are enough to provoke a saint, yourself---What is all this stuff, this letter, this forgery, this nonsense! He personate a parson! I think I should know a clergyman in any dress. I am not quite so easily imposed upon as you, Sir William.

Sir *W.* I will not answer you---But thou, undutiful, unhappy girl! what can'st thou say?

Mrs. *Win.* I wish you would hear reason, and spare your reproaches, Sir William.

Har. No---give them vent---I only fear to live, not die---Let loose your rage upon me: I implore it; I will endure it all.

Sir *W.* You have deserved it. Your own deceit has fallen upon your head: you are betrayed, dishonoured, and abandoned, both by your villain husband, and your wretched father.

Har. O, sir! have pity on my anguish and despair!

Sir *W.* I cannot bear your sight---My being, life itself, is hateful to me. [*To Mrs. Win.*] This is your pride, your rage for quality!---You have undone my child, and I renounce you both!

[*Exit.*]

Har. Will you forsake me, also?

Mrs. *Win.* Forsake you! no, child: this is a perfect chimera of your father's.

Har. O, let us go this moment, implore his good-

ness to forgive our fault, and fly for ever from this hateful dwelling.

Mrs. Win. By no means; I do n't approve of your quitting your husband's house. I would have you write to him immediately, and desire him to come to us this evening.

Har. I write to him! You make me shudder at the thought.

Mrs. Win. It must be done, child—I insist upon it. This is some trick, meant to impose upon us.

Har. I feel the imposition here——Lord Eustace has betrayed us.

Mrs. Win. I tell you, Harriot, it is impossible---he is at least the ninth peer of his family, in a direct line.

Har. Though honours may be——honour is not hereditary, madam.

Mrs. Win. No matter; write to him, I say: you are and must be Lady Eustace, at any rate, I tell you.

Har. And can you think me vile enough, after such perfidy, to receive his hand? Can I vow to honour the man whom I no longer esteem? Shall I go to the altar with him, and swear to be faithful to a perjured wretch? again repeat my vows of everlasting love for him who has abandoned, and undone me? No; I would sooner die a thousand, thousand deaths!

Mrs. Win. You are just as obstinate as your father—Now you have taken this into your head, nothing can get it out again.

Har. Do you think my father could be so inhuman,

without just grounds, to stab me to the heart? It is, it is too true!

Mrs. *Win.* I will not believe a word of it.-----I never was mistaken in my life; my brother is ever in the wrong.-----I desire, Harriot, you will write to Lord Eustace directly.

Har. Indeed I will not. [Exit.

Mrs. *Win.* Then, positively, I will---I am determined to know the truth from him. I own I begin to be a little doubtful about this matter myself. This letter may be forged---but those eternal reports confound me---'T is impossible he should dare to deceive me---but if he has, he shall find that the Ap Evans's are not to be injured with impunity.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The Park. Enter Captain LLOYD, and Col. EVANS.

Colonel Evans.

My father in London! you surprise me, captain---What can have brought him here?

Capt. Nay, as to the matter of surprise, my young hero, your father was quite as much astonished at hearing of your being in the same port, as you can be; and as to your aunt Winifred, she stared with as much amazement, as the sailors that spied the first Patagonian. Your sister, indeed, seemed more pleased

than any of them, at the news, and inquired whether I had met you in healthy condition, and if I knew your moorings.

Col. My gentle Harriot!—I am impatient to see her.

Capt. Hoist sail, and away, then; I'll be your convey, though I should like better to drop anchor, and take in refreshment, for an hour or so, at the Admiralty Coffee-house, where I have appointed Captain Blast of the Boreas, and some other jolly lads to meet me.

Col. I am much obliged to you, captain, but will by no means suffer you to break your engagement.—I have a little business to dispatch, before I can see my father, and shall easily find out the house, without troubling you.

Capt. Why, that you may readily do, as it is inclosed by a very high wall, and has a large handsome gate-way, with a bell at the door.—Aye, aye, that bell was not placed there to call the crew to prayers, but to prevent the neighbours from knowing who comes in and out, as they might do, if there was a rapper only.

Col. I can't see why that caution should be necessary.

Capt. It is of no great use at present—But time has been—Harke me, Harry; there is a devilish storm brewing over your head; you may look for dirty weather, I can tell you.—Your father is in a confounded passion at your having quitted the regiment, and is strongly persuaded that you'll spring a leak, my boy.

Col. I wrote to my father, some time ago, to acquaint him with my motives; I have also written to my colonel, to account for my conduct.

Capt. Never fear, I'll take care of you, as I am sure you did not desert from cowardice——But it was a silly trick, Harry.—Some girl, I suppose, is in the wind; they make fools of the wisest of us.—I remember, when I was stationed at Gibraltar, a Donna Isabella——

Col. Would you were there now: I know not how to get rid of this tiresome man. [Aside.

Capt. A Spaniard, you may guess by the name, had a devilish mind to come off with me, as she said, to see foreign parts---But I weighed anchor sily, one moon-light night, and left the poor signiora on shore——But all men have not the gift of discretion: though I was a youngster then, Harry, not much turned of thirty, I'll assure you——

Col. I think it was rather cruel in you to forsake the lady, captain.

Capt. Why, I did hear afterwards, that there was a ballad made about it, intitled *The Cruel Captain's Garland*, and set to a very woeful tune——I laugh at these things, Harry; but I find you are a truer lover, and have come here in spite of wind and tide, in pursuit of your mistress---You can't expect, however, that Sir William will be highly delighted, if you should happen to make a losing voyage of it.

Col. I hope, sir, it will be the most prosperous one of my life, and I shall be able to give my father a satisfactory account of my conduct.

Capt. Why, if your mistress be well freighted, a sixty thousand pounder or so, he will have no objection, I suppose. But come, my boy, tell me a little about it: is she maid or widow, Harry? I like to hear love stories mightily.

Col. She is a maiden, young and beautiful, and of a rank and fortune beyond my expectation, captain.--- We have loved one another long; her guardians are upon the point of disposing of her to another; she has desired me to free her from their tyranny, and accept of her hand as my reward—Glorious recompence!

Capt. Why, Harry, this is running before the wind, with a vengeance—Not so fast, not so fast, my boy, you go at the rate of twelve knots an hour—This story sounds a little romantic though, and puts me in mind of the lady that the flying man comes to save from the monster—But 'tis odd enough that I should not know this lady; pr'ythee, Harry, what's her name?

Col. You must excuse my not answering that question, captain, as you might possibly become my rival.

Capt. Why, to be sure, if she had applied to me, she should have been far enough from her guardians by this; we'd have run gunnel to all the way, my boy, and left them and you on the dry land, Harry.

Col. I shall tell her of your intended gallantry, captain; and I hope you and she will be better acquainted---for the present, I must wish you a good evening.

Capt. Nay, if you have a mind to sheer off, colonel,

I wish you a fair gale.---I never grapple with any but a pretty lass, or an enemy; and so your servant, your servant, colonel. [Exit Capt.

Col. My meeting with this blundering sailor, was unlucky, as my father may, perhaps, be displeased at my not waiting on him, the moment I knew of his being in London.---But I cannot break my engagement with Lady Anne---every thing must give way to that charming woman---I will fly to her directly, and if possible, find time to pay my duty to my father before I sleep. [Exit.

SCENE II.

Sir William's Apartment. Enter Mrs. WINIFRED and ROBERT.

Mrs. Win. He will come, then?---You have staid a great while, Robert.

Rob. My lord was not at home, madam; and as you desired I should bring an answer, I was obliged to wait his coming---Every thing seems in confusion, in the family; his lordship, it seems, is to be married in a few days; they are all packing up, and the servants scarce knew where to find pen, ink, and paper.

Mrs. Win. This alarms me---'T is but too plain I have been deceived. [Aside.]---Hearken to me, Robert, and do exactly what I command you---go and place yourself by the private door, in the garden,

and the moment you hear a key turn in the lock, come and tell me.

Rob. I shall obey you, madam.—I am sure all is not right. [*Aside. Exit.*]

Mrs. Win. I must, if possible, prevent Sir William's knowing of this interview——But here he comes.

Enter Sir WILLIAM.

I hope you have vented all your rage, brother, and that one may talk a little calmly to you now?

Sir W. O yes: I have great reason to be calm.

Mrs. Win. I can tell you that a little more of your outrageous fury would have killed your daughter; nor do I know what fatal effect it might have had upon my own constitution.

Sir W. That is not very easily shocked, I believe.

Mrs. Win. That is more than you know, at least, brother; but a person so entirely given up to their passions, never once reflect upon consequences.

Sir W. I wish you had reflected upon consequences; but those who have err'd themselves are ever ready to reflect on others.

Mrs. Win. A truce with reflections on all sides; and in case that there should be any truth in this infamous story, let us set about forming some scheme for redressing the affront that he has dared to offer to our family.

Sir W. I shall not stand in need of your assistance. I am determin'd how to act.

Mrs. Win. Pray, Sir William, do not be head-

strong, but for once be advised by me.—I have thought of a scheme, and I am sure it will answer.

Sir *W.* What is it?

Mrs. *Win.* It is happy for my family that I have a little sense, brother, though I do not boast of it.

Sir *W.* Your wisdom in this matter has been conspicuous; but what new proofs of it are we to expect at present?

Mrs. *Win.* Suppose we were to send for Lord Eustace, and try what effect Harriot's tears and my reproaches would have upon him. He has always had the greatest deference for my opinion.

Sir *W.* Your opinion!—Is this your boasted scheme? He will not come; base as he is, it is impossible he could endure her sight.

Mrs. *Win.* Your affected sagacity is enough to set one mad. You are mistaken, as you always are.

Sir *W.* I know it cannot be; the consciousness of his vile treachery will keep him far from hence. He dare not see her.

Mrs. *Win.* I cannot bear this contradiction. [*Aside.*] For once let conviction conquer your obstinacy: I wrote to him myself in Harriot's name; I have had his answer; he will be here this night.

Sir *W.* And shall my daughter sue to him for justice? Implore him to receive the hand he has rejected, and the heart he has betray'd? Shall she be sacrificed to make his peace? I tell you no—I will have other vengeance.

Mrs. *Win.* I see these horrid punctilios will ruin

all——If we can make up this matter quietly, what does it signify whether he be a man of honour or no?

Sir *W.* I never must forget that I am one.

Mrs. *Win.* I wish you would have a little patience, and hear me out. If this should fail, I have another project in my head which I am certain must succeed. My imagination has not been idle, and I think it full as active as your own.

Sir *W.* I believe it may be rather more so. But I have no leisure for imaginary matters now. [*Going.*]

Mrs. *Win.* Pray, Sir William, don't be so positive—you know Lord Eustace has a place at Court.

Sir *W.* What then?

Mrs. *Win.* I would, at least, let the king know what a servant he has about him; and as I may reasonably suppose that his majesty may have heard of our ancestors, though he knows nothing of you, Sir William, I would advise you to throw yourself at his feet. He is himself a father.

Sir *W.* Blest may he long be in that honoured title! though I am rendered wretched by the name. But what can he do for me?

Mrs. *Win.* Disgrace and displace the man who has wronged you, although he be a lord.

Sir *W.* What is his title? has he not debas'd it——But know, there is no difference of rank before the throne—degrees of elevation are only seen by those who look above them: kings must look down, and therefore see all equal; and in our monarch's sight, the rights even of the meanest subject are precious as his own——But yet he cannot heal my wrongs.

Mrs. *Win.* Though I can never believe that a knight baronet is upon a par with a lord, Sir William.

Sir *W.* Absurd distinctions! I will hear no more—The man who has the means of justice in his own hands, and seeks for it elsewhere, deserves to be the sport of chance, and dupe of his own weakness. Then let him come this night—I'll meet him as I ought.

Mrs. *Win.* You are exactly in the same case of the Diffidends at Warsaw; nothing but force of arms will content you; and like them too you may be undone by it. Suppose you were to meet Lord Eustace, and he should kill you?

Sir *W.* I shall not then out-live my honour. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. *W.* This self-will'd man distresses me extremely, he is for ever disconcerting my schemes—There never was such a race of idiots as the family of the Ap Evans's, myself excepted—there is not a head in this house but my own.—To be sure I have been a little over-reach'd in this affair of the wedding; but the greatest politicians are liable to mistakes—I hope to repair all yet, and make my niece a woman of quality one way or another.

Enter ROBERT.

Rob. Madam, I have just now heard the private door of the garden unlock, and ran to tell you.

Mrs. *Win.* Vanish! [*Exit* Rob.] I must not let my brother and Lord Eustace meet till every thing is settled. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

Garden Parlour. Enter Lord EUSTACE and Colonel EVANS, with their Swords in their hands. Lord Eustace lays his on a Chair.

Lord Eust. You are here in safety, sir, and may put up your sword; this house is mine, notwithstanding the mysterious manner of my entrance. I hope you are not wounded?

Col. Thanks to your courage and generosity, sir, I have escaped unhurt. I thought our police was better conducted than to suffer our lives to be endangered by footpads.

Lord Eust. These accidents are less frequent in this country than they used to be; but no code of laws was ever yet framed that could make all men honest. I am extremely happy at having come so opportunely to your assistance.

Col. I shall ever be grateful for the obligation, sir; but may I not know to whom I am obliged?

Lord Eust. Do not mention the matter as a favour, I intreat you—You would, doubtless, have done the same for me; and had I happened to have come first, I should have stood in need of your assistance.—I am called Lord Eustace.

Col. I shall remain indebted to your lordship, and wish you a good night. What a rencontre! [*Aside.*

Lord *Eust.* I could wish you not to leave me, sir; 't is late, and therefore unsafe for either of us to return alone—The fellows who attacked you may lie in wait for you—I shall not stay here a quarter of an hour; and as I wish to be better acquainted with you, I should be glad to know your address.

Col. I am extremely obliged to your lordship. I am called Colonel Weston; you 'll hear of me at the hotel in Pall Mall. [Going.

Lord *Eust.* Let me entreat you not to leave me—I am at present in a very difficult and disagreeable situation.

Col. Your lordship has a right to command me; but I hope you will not stay longer than the time you have mentioned, as I have some business to transact this night.

Lord *Eust.* If that be the case, I will not trespass upon you; perhaps there may be something similar in our circumstances; for your business, at this hour, must, in all probability, be with a lady, and you may reasonably suppose, by my being alone and on foot, that I am come to meet one here.

Col. Let me entreat your lordship not to lose such precious minutes, but fly to the expecting fair one.—This is an odd discovery. [Aside.

Lord *Eust.* The matter is not as you imagine, sir.

Col. There is perhaps a jealous husband, or an old cross father, my lord.

Lord *Eust.* Neither, colonel. But matches made for interest only, too often break the most delightful

ties, the union of fond hearts—The lady who lives here is the most amiable of her sex, and I adore her; yet am on the point of marrying one whom I can never love.

Col. This is a sad affair indeed, my lord.—I could save you a great deal of trouble if I were at liberty to tell you Lady Anne's intentions. [*Aside.*]

Lord Eust. I fear the unhappy girl has heard of my intended marriage, as she has written to me to come here this night—I never was so embarrassed or distressed.

Col. Some girl you keep, I presume, my lord.

Lord Eust. By no means; she is a woman of family and character—I am almost distracted about her. I will now step and see if the coast be clear, as there are some of the family that I should not choose to encounter at this late hour, and return to you, sir, instantly—You see what confidence you have already inspired me with. [*Exit.*]

Col. A confidence indeed! but of what use can it be to me, who am bound in honour not to betray it? [*Looks at his watch.*] Bless me, it is now past eleven—the time I spent with Lady Anne stole unperceived away. It will certainly be too late to go to my father's to-night; I must defer my visit till to-morrow; and as Lord Eustace do n't seem in a great hurry to be married, I shall have time enough to get Lady Anne out of her guardian's power, and prepare my father for her reception. But here comes my new friend.

Re-enter Lord EUSTACE.

Lord Eust. All is quiet; I must therefore take the opportunity of conveying you safe out again; and I hope to have the pleasure of being better known to you.

Col. Your lordship's inclination does me honour.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

Another Apartment. Enter Mrs. WINIFRED, leading HARRIOT.

Mrs. Win. Your obstinacy is enough to distract me; I say you shall see him.

Enter Lord EUSTACE.

Har. Support me, gracious Heaven!

Lord Eust. My dearest Harriot, your billet has alarmed me more than I can express—I have made the utmost dispatch that was possible to fly to you; and the moments that have passed since I received your commands, have been the most painful of my life.

Mrs. Win. Your lordship need not enter into a defence of your punctuality.

Lord Eust. Why is my Harriot's brow overcast—and her eyes quenched in tears? Why is she silent?

Mrs. Win. Ask your own heart!

Lord *Eust.* Is it possible that the idle report of my marriage can have distress'd her thus?

Har. Horrid dissembler! [Aside.

Mrs. Win. Do not exhaust your spirits, my dear Harriot; give me leave to talk to him [Aside to Harriot.] So then, my lord, what we have heard upon the subject is but an idle report, without the least foundation?

Lord *Eust.* If you will but recollect what has pass'd between your niece and me, madam, you must be fully convinced it can be nothing more.

Mrs. Win. And yet, my lord, you seem confused.

Lord *Eust.* Why really, madam, the doubts you seem to entertain of my veracity are a little distressing—But let me hope my Harriot will believe me, while I swear——

Har. Away, my lord! I can believe no more—— Could I have thought that either my wrongs or my resentment were capable of increase!

Lord *Eust.* Really, madam, I do not clearly understand the meaning of this conversation, and I must say, I think it rather severe to be condemned unheard.

Mrs. Win. I can contain my rage no longer; read that. [Gives him Langwood's letter.

Lord *Eust.* Langwood's letter! All is discovered then! [Aside.

Mrs. Win. I perceive that even a man of quality may be disconcerted—Your lordship did not use to be at a loss for an answer.

Lord *Eust.* Have patience, madam; I confess that appearances are against me.

Mrs. *Win.* Aye, and realities too, my lord.

Lord *Eust.* I do not mean to justify myself—No, I plead guilty. The fear of losing you, my Harriot, whom I loved more than life, and the apprehension of disobliging my father, tempted me to make you mine in an illegal manner—But here I swear I will repair the injury.

Mrs. *Win.* I think it will do; matters are in a right train now, if I can but prevent Sir William from interrupting them. [*Aside. Exit.*]

Lord *Eust.* You are offended, Harriot, and have cause—but let not your resentment turn against yourself.

Har. Could I forgive myself, my lord, I then might pardon you; but while I think my punishment severe, I own I have deserved it.

Lord *Eust.* You judge yourself too hardly—Has either your virtue or your delicacy suffered by my crime? Nay, even your reputation is still free from stain; and if you will now condescend to accept my hand, my future life shall be devoted to your happiness.

Har. And can you think I'll be again deceived?

Lord *Eust.* By heaven you shall not!

Har. Nay, I will not—your poor evasions have no weight with me—leave me, for ever leave me. I will not be united to you by any ties. [*Going.*]

Lord *Eust.* Yet hear me, Harriot.

Har. Would I had never heard you. But though

I were to listen to you now, you cannot shake my purpose.—No—I can die!—— [Exit.]

Lord *Eust.* No, live my Harriot! Live to make me happy.——

Sir *W.* [Within.] Where is he? I must and will see him!

Lord *Eust.* Ah! Sir William! This is unlucky!—I am not prepared for this encounter. [Aside.]

Enter Sir WILLIAM.

Sir *W.* What! is it possible that you should dare to enter underneath this roof?

Lord *Eust.* What should I fear, Sir William?

Sir *W.* Your own base heart, and my much injured honour; which calls upon you now for justice.

Lord *Eust.* So then, I find the pride of injured virtue was assumed. Your daughter would secure me by compulsion—but I despise assassins!

Sir *W.* Do not, my lord, insult my patience farther; I did not know you were without a sword: on that account I put up mine; but know, young man, I shall not rest till it has done me justice.

Lord *Eust.* Sir William, though I cannot pretend to justify the injuries I have done your daughter, I neither must, nor will be compelled to make the reparation; I should indeed be unworthy to become her husband, if fear could make me so.

Sir *W.* At the first hour you saw her, sir, I should have deemed you so—'t is not your birth, young man, can varnish over vices such as yours—your rank renders them the more obnoxious.

Lord *Eust.* I readily allow myself to blame, Sir William.

Sir *W.* You cannot then be base enough to refuse the sole atonement which is now within your power.

Lord *Eust.* I will confess I felt my heart subdued by Harriot's grief and tenderness—they had more power than armies. She might have triumphed over me, but——

Sir *W.* You surely do not think I mean to give my daughter to you! What! to reward your vices with a heart like hers—to have my child become a second time a sacrifice to that vain idol, Title!—No, sir, it is another kind of reparation I demand, and I will have it.

Lord *Eust.* A brave man, Sir William, never thinks meanly of another's courage; and as I know you to be so, I hope you will not think me otherwise if I decline your offer.

Sir *W.* On what pretence, my lord? Have you not wronged me?

Lord *Eust.* For that reason only I cannot, dare not, draw my sword against you.

Sir *W.* These are new rules of honour, formed on the principles of fear, my lord.

Lord *Eust.* Fear, Sir William!

Sir *W.* Yes, my lord, I say it; none but a coward ever will decline to meet the man he has injured; and should you still persist in your refusal, I will proclaim you one.

Lord *Eust.* This is too much—But consider, sir, you are—my Harriot's father.

Sir *W.* That consideration would brace a nerveless arm. But look upon me, sir; I am not bent beneath the weight of years—my mind and body both are firm as yours; and the first shock that ever reached my heart, except her mother's loss, is the disgrace you have brought upon my child. The stain must be effaced, my lord.

Lord *Eust.* I know not how to act; should I declare my intention to marry Harriot, he would despise me; and if I fight him, that renders it impossible.

[*Aside.*

Sir *W.* Come, come, my lord, this is no time for pausing—you must determine instantly to give me the satisfaction I require, or see your title posted up, with the honourable addition of coward to it.

Lord *Eust.* Nay then, Sir William, though with reluctance, I must accept your offer. Name your time, sir.

Sir *W.* At eight to-morrow morning.

Lord *Eust.* I'll call upon you, sir, and bring a friend—But let me once more add, that you are the only man on earth that I should fear to meet upon such terms.

[*Exit.*

Sir *W.* I am glad my son is ignorant of this affair. Had he been here, he must have fought Lord Eustace. He has, I hope, a long and happy life before him;—mine, though not quite worn out, is of less value; and if I lose it in defence of my child's honour, 'tis well disposed of.

Enter Mrs. WINIFRED.

Mrs. Win. So she was, or might have been, very well disposed of, but for your intemperance. You have managed your matters very cleverly to be sure. You have driven Lord Eustace away, and the family of the Ap Evans's are disgraced for ever.

Sir W. Thou weak, vain woman! whose folly has undone me and my child.

Mrs. W. Not I truly, Sir William—It is her own high-flown principles that have ruined her. My lord offered to marry her over and over again, it seems, but she, with her nonsensical, romantical notions, affected to despise him, and refused to be his wife on any terms.

Sir W. Has she? I rejoice to hear it.—

Mrs. Win. Rejoice, at what! at her being a mad woman? I think, in her situation, she need not have been so nice. It would have been much better for her to have been Lady Eustace, even against his will, than Miss Harriot Evans against her own.

Sir W. How nearly pride and meanness are allied! You would obtrude your niece upon a man who has abandoned and dishonoured her; then vainly think she might receive distinction from a title, which force, not choice, bestowed.

Mrs. Win. Brother, I neither understand logic nor sophistry, but I am very sorry matters are as they are. As to Harriot, I believe it will be of no great consequence to her; she will soon break her heart, I

imagine. But the scandal of this affair will rest upon the survivors. I don't think I shall ever be able to shew my face at Monmouth again.

Sir W. Away! The moments now are too precious to be wasted. Where is Harriot?

Mrs. Win. In her chamber, like a distracted wretch, tearing herself to pieces. I endeavoured to comfort her as much as I could, by telling her how wrong she had acted, and that she might have lived to be a countess, if she had followed my advice.

Sir W. Was this the consolation you offered to her grief? How could you be so barbarous? The proper spirit she has shewn in refusing that worthless lord, has replaced her in my heart—I will go try to comfort her. [Exit.

Mrs. Win. Aye, so you may; you are the fittest to go together. For my part, I disclaim the mismanagement of the whole affair, and remember, *I'll no longer be accountable for measures that I am not suffered to guide.* [Exit.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Mr. Frampton's Apartment. Lord EUSTACE and Mr. FRAMPTON discovered. Lord Eustace rises from a Table, as if writing.

Frampton.

Your meeting with Sir William was extremely unfortunate.

Lord Eust. I most sincerely wish we had not met; but that is past——

Fram. Then I suppose you think the worst is over.

Lord Eust. No, Frampton, 'tis to come.—Sir William has insisted upon my meeting him this morning.

Fram. Impossible, my lord! you must not fight him. Think on the consequences; if you should be so unhappy as to kill the father of the woman you have highly injured, the world would certainly unite against you, and drive you from society.

Lord Eust. In that case I should be but ill qualified for solitude I confess.—Now, my dear Frampton, as I know you are my friend, and as I would not wish any other person should be acquainted with this story, I must desire you will be my second.

Fram. It is much beneath a man of honour to make professions either of his friendship or his courage; but, on this occasion I must tell you, that I would hazard my life for your service in any other cause; but I will not be concerned in this infamous affair; and I say again, you must not raise your arm against Sir William.

Lord Eust. You do not know how I am circumstanced. He has compelled me to this duel; said he would brand me for a coward if I declined it. What would you have me do?

Fram. Marry his daughter.

Lord Eust. No—Though I love her with the truest fondness, I will not wed her upon such terms;

nor suffer her to think so meanly of me, as to suppose I poorly bartered a coward's hand to save this worthless life.

Fram. Yet, consider, my lord; that let the consequences of this duel be what they may, nothing can acquit you of that justice you owe both to her and yourself.

Lord Eust. I own that I have greatly wronged her.

Fram. It is now within your power to make reparation, by becoming her husband; but should you deprive her of a father, she never can be united to the man who killed him.

Lord Eust. I will not kill him, Frampton—Urge me no farther—My mind is torn to pieces.

Fram. Believe me, my lord, you are not in a right course to heal it.

Lord Eust. No matter; you have refused to be a witness of my conduct, Mr. Frampton.

Fram. And do so still: I never had the least reason to doubt your bravery; and as this is an affair, in which only principals can be concerned, I hope it will be no imputation upon mine if I decline seeing your lordship engaged in a strife where I cannot wish you success.

Lord Eust. I shall not press you; but have yet a request to make.

Fram. Name it, my lord.

Lord Eust. If I should fall, deliver this letter to my father; and if there be any circumstance of my misconduct left untold, which may do Harriot justice,

inform him of it fully.—I must now go seek for a less cautious friend than Mr. Frampton.

Fram. Your lordship will scarcely ever find a sincerer. [*Exit Lord Eustace.*] Of what opposite qualities is this young man compounded? What a mixture of good and evil! But are we not all made of the same materials? The devil himself cannot always mislead a man that has principles; they will recur in spite of him, and make their owner act rightly upon trying occasions. This letter to his father shews him to be a man of honour.—Something must be done to preserve him.—I cannot give him up. An experiment, though a hazardous one, must be made directly. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

Sir William's Apartment. Enter HARRIOT and Mrs. WINIFRED.

Har. When shall my tortured mind find rest!—Gracious Heaven, preserve me from distraction! Perhaps in a few moments my father's sword may pierce my husband's heart. Why has that tender name escaped my lips? Resentment should have stopt its passage to my tongue, and sighs opposed it utterance.

Mrs. Win. I don't see any harm, child, in your calling him your husband; though to be sure he is not so in law.—But I would have you hope for the best, Harriot.

Har. No, I will hope no more—What should I hope?—My pride, my reason might have scorn'd him living, but I will love him, and lament him dead!—Would I had died the hour before I listen'd to your counsel, and set at nought the authority of my father!—Your cruel kindness has undone me!

Mrs. Win. I should not have thought of meeting such a return, for that kindness, from you, Miss Evans.

Har. Forgive and pity my distraction, madam! 'Tis I that have brought ruin on you all—But if you ever loved me, think of some means, to find my brother out: he may prevent this duel, and save me from the lowest depth of misery.

Mrs. Win. Really, child, you are extremely ignorant; you talk as if you were at Monmouth, where our family are known, and properly respected—But in such a place as London, it may possibly be as difficult to find out an Ap Evans, as any of those mushroom gentry, whose *table* does not contain above three generations.

Har. My dearest aunt, do not place bars before my only hope; let all our servants be sent out to seek him.

Mrs. Win. Well, child, if it will make you easy, they shall go directly; though I am of opinion it will be but a fruitless inquiry. But the being too easily prevailed upon, is my greatest foible—I wish I had a little of Sir William's obstinacy about me.

Har. Consider, madam, I am on the rack; do not lose time, I beg of you.

Mrs. Win. Well, be composed, I will send them;

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they shall search all the genteel coffee-houses, at the West End of the town—it is impossible he should be in the City.—But don't let your father know that I told you of the duel: he thinks women are never to be trusted with any thing; and has no more respect for the Empress-queen, or the Czarina, than I have for a country justice. [Exit Mrs. Winifred.]

Har. How can she be insensible to griefs like mine!

—Enter Sir WILLIAM EVANS.

Sir W. What, up so early, Harriot! who has disturbed your rest?

Har. O, sir! where is that powerful opiate to be found, that can restore it?

Sir W. The consciousness of your own heart, and my forgiveness of your only fault, should set your mind at peace.

Har. What! while that fault endangers your dear life, and robs my brother of the best of fathers?—unworthy as I am to call you by that name.

Sir W. Her grief almost unmans me. [*Aside.*]—Why are you agitated thus?

Har. O, do not make my brother hate me too!—Will he not call me parricide?—or if——

Sir W. Who has acquainted you with this affair? I did not think there was a heart so brutal. But do not, Harriot, thus alarm yourself—all may yet be repaired,

Har. Never, sir, never! for here I vow, that should Lord Eustace arm his hand against your life, no power on earth shall ever make me his.

Sir *W.* Harriot, the laws of *honour* must be satisfied; and when I was first blest with the fond name of father, *yours* then became my most peculiar care; nor life, nor aught on earth, is half so dear to me.—Nay, Harriot, do not weep, I blame you not; your youth and innocence, have been deceived.

Har. You are too good, too gentle to me, sir; I have deserved all the distress I feel.—Yet hear me, sir—If this must be—might not my brother, sir, dear as he is to me——

Sir *W.* My determination cannot now be alter'd; retire, my child.

Enter ROBERT.

Rob. Captain Lloyd, sir, desires to see your honour.

Sir *W.* Shew him up.

[*Exit Robert.*]

Har. Oh, sir!

Sir *W.* Leave me, my Harriot, leave me.

[*Embraces her.*]

Har. My father!

[*Exit Harriot.*]

Sir *W.* My heart bleeds for her.

Enter Captain LLOYD.

Capt. I have crouded all the sail I could make, to come up with you, baronet; and now that I am here, I should be glad to know in what soundings we are; and whether we are to steer starboard or port?

Sir *W.* My letter, I believe, captain, must have given you to understand the reason, of my desiring to see you---At present I am unhappily engaged, in a

duel, and the opinion I have, both of your bravery and friendship, made me look upon you as the properest person of my acquaintance, to be my second.

Capt. As to that matter, Sir William, I think I have discharged as many broadsides as any gentleman in the navy---though I never yet drew a trigger, out of the line; but powder and ball, I suppose, do pretty much the same execution by land as by sea; though standing fair to the windward, is sometimes, of great use to us, baronet.

Sir W. It is of little consequence which way the wind sits at present, captain.

Capt. I can't say much to that, Sir William.---But I wish you had acquainted me with this business a day or two ago, I should have liked to have made a little will---But 't is no great matter, neither---For if I should pop over, your daughter's husband will be my heir.

Sir W. There is not the least occasion for that precaution, captain, as your life will not be endangered.

Capt. How so? When the ship is once engaged, must not every man aboard her fight? All but the chaplain, and he should be busy, in his way, too.

Sir W. In this case, my friend, you need be no farther concerned, than to see that the laws of honour, are not violated.

Capt. Hold, hold, Sir William! this may do for some of your fresh water sparks; but Jerry Llody will never lie to, when the signal's given for chace---no lug-sail work for me; I shall come pouring down

upon them. But pray, who is your antagonist? And what is the cause of your quarrel? Was it a drunken business?---I was pretty jolly myself, last night, but don't remember that I had words with any one except the waiter.

Sir W. I should be ashamed, captain, were I weak enough to run into one vice, from the consequences of another, or hazard my life this day, for having been guilty of excess last night.

Capt. Well! if that is not the case, I don't know what it is. For think you are not quarrelsome when you are sober.-----But have you breakfasted? Though you may have no great appetite, my stomach has been ready for a mess this half hour, I can tell you.

Sir W. We shall find every thing prepared in the next room.

Capt. Let us make to the store-room directly; and while we are laying in our provisions, you may tell me who is your man, and all about it. [Exeunt.]

Enter Lord EUSTACE, Colonel EVANS, and a Servant.

Lord Eust. Let your master know that I am here.

Col. This is the most romantic affair, my lord, that ever I heard of. To set out determined to stand your enemy's fire without returning it!

Lord Eust. The wrongs I have done him, and his family, should be atoned and not increased, colonel; and were it now within my power, I would not take his life, even to save my own.

Col. There I think you are right, my lord; but I can't say I should carry my politeness so far as to make him a compliment of mine.

Lord Eust. There is something much higher than politeness in the question at present—justice, colonel—A man may dispense with the one but not the other.

Col. I am entirely of your opinion; but as your sentiments are so very delicate, and that you really love the girl, why may not I, as your second, step in, and save the explosion of gunpowder, and the lady's character, by preventing the duel?

Lord Eust. I will not suffer it.

Col. As you intend to offer her your hand, when this business is over, I don't see why you should run the hazard of losing life or limb; and if the father be a man of honour, as you say he is, I should think—

[*Harriot behind the Scenes.*]

Har. I will not be restrained! No, I will rush between their cruel swords!

Enter at the same instant, at opposite doors, Sir WILLIAM and HARRIOT.

Har. My brother here! then Heaven has heard my prayer.

Sir W. My son!

Col. My father!

Har. Will you not speak to me?

[*To the Colonel who turns from her.*]

Lord Eust. Are you her brother?

Col. Yes, I have that dishonour—Ill fated girl!

Sir *W.* What can this mean? Are you come hither to abet the man, who has disgraced your sister?

Col. My father can't suppose it.

Sir *W.* Retire this moment, then, and take her with you—My lord, I am ready to attend you singly.

Har. You shall not go, for I will cling for ever here.

[*Falls at Sir William's feet.*]

Lord *Eust.* I cannot bear this sight-----Pray hear me, sir.

Sir *W.* Take her away. [*To the Colonel.*] This is no time for expostulation—Come, my lord—

[*To Lord Eustace.*]

Col. Nay, then, sir, I must interfere—I cannot suffer you to turn assassin, even for her—Lord Eustace has not charged his pistols, nor does he mean to raise his arm against you—You cannot take his life upon these terms.

Sir *W.* Does he despise me, then?

Har. A little gleam of hope breaks in upon me.

[*Aside.*]

Lord *Eust.* Your son can answer that, Sir William.

Col. With truth, my lord, I say you do not—Now, you must answer me. [*To Lord Eustace.*]

Lord *Eust.* Your being perfectly acquainted with my intentions towards your sister, before I knew that you were related to her, should, I think, be a sufficient answer to any demand you can possibly have to make.

Col. By no means, my lord; though your tenderness for the weakness you have caused, may incline

you to repair her lost honour, I must and will be guardian of my own; and nothing but your meeting me on fair and equal terms, can heal the wound you have given it.

Sir W. Now, Harry, you are my son.

Har. Inhuman brother! will nothing but his life content your rage? Let me die for him.

Lord Eust. My angel Harriot!—But since it must be so, I am ready, colonel. [Aside.

Col. I hope your lordship thinks I stand acquitted of my obligations to you, by preventing your engaging, on such unequal terms, for that unworthy girl.

Lord Eust. You wrong her much; it is I alone am guilty.

Sir W. It is true, my son; Harriot is innocent.

Col. If that be true, I have a double right to vengeance.

Lord Eust. You have a right to choose your reparation, sir, and I attend you.

Har. When shall my miseries end!

As Lord Eustace and Colonel Evans are going off, enter

Mr. FRAMPTON.

Fram. I hope, this moment, madam.

Sir W. What can this mean?

Lord Eust. Frampton!

Fram. I have no sort of business with your lordship, my commission is directed to Sir William Evans, and Lady Eustace.

Har. Do not insult me, sir; I am not Lady Eustace.

Sir W. Nor ever shall be.

Fram. That is a point, I think, that will not admit of being contested.

Col. You are mistaken, sir—but this is trifling.

Lord Eust. I am on the rack—explain yourself, my friend.

Fram. You must give me leave to speak, then—
When I saw the distress and anxiety of your mind, I was fully satisfied of your honourable intentions towards this lady, from the letter you intrusted me with, which yet remains unopened.—I determined, if possible, to preserve both your life and honour, for her sake, by preventing your duel with her father, and your marriage with Lady Anne Mountfort.

Col. The first event, sir, has been prevented, without your assistance, and I will venture to promise, that the second shall never take place.

Fram. I am quite of your opinion, sir. As I can this moment from Lord Delville, to acknowledge this fair lady as his son's wife—but this letter, Sir William, will more fully explain his lordship's sentiments.

Lord Eust. My generous friend! my guardian angel!

Fram. My lord, I neither desire nor deserve your thanks.—If I have been in any way serviceable to you, attribute it to my real attachment, to your truly amiable wife.

Col. I do not understand all this.

Enter Mrs. WINIFRED.

Mrs. Win. 'T is as I guess'd exactly.—All smoke, and no fire.—My nephew, here! Then something may be done—I rejoice to see you, Harry.

Sir *W.* Lord Delville has behaved like a man of honour; but yet I must inform you, sir, that the generosity of his conduct cannot efface the baseness of his son—My daughter shall never be his wife—He has disgraced her.

[To Frampton.

—Lord *Eust.* Never, sir! Here is my witness—this letter, which I now entreat my Harriot to peruse, will fully prove, that had I fallen by your hand, her honour would have been preserved.

Har. I will not read it.

Mrs. Win. I think that was behaving like a man of quality.

Fram. Let me entreat you, Sir William, to look it over, as I can with truth and honour, attest the sincerity of the writer.

Col. There need no farther vouchers. Let Harriot now determine for herself.

Har. The struggle is too great.—I cannot speak—Leave me, my lord—

Lord *Eust.* Never, whilst I have life, will I forsake you.

Har. It cannot be, my lord—Though I have the highest sense of gratitude, for Lord Delville's goodness to me, and though I believe you perfectly sincere in what you say at present; yet the humiliating situation, into which you have plunged me, the distress you have brought upon my family, your attachment to another lady—

Lord *Eust.* With shame I must confess my trifling with a lady, whom I could not have loved, even had my Harriot been unknown to me.

Col. I think I may venture to assure your lordship, that Lady Anne Mountfort will be very ready to forgive your want of passion for her, as her partiality for me might, perhaps, have been the cause of her blindness to your superior merits.

Lord Eust. I congratulate your good fortune, colonel; and am indebted to your generosity, for removing every shadow of difficulty on Lady Anne's account.

Mrs. Win. Nephew, I wish you joy—There will be one woman of quality, at least, in the family.

Har. Weak as I am, my lord, you cannot shake my resolution.

Lord Eust. I have no hope but in your interposition, sir: you are her father, and have been most offended; yet you, perhaps, have the goodness to forgive!

[*To Sir William.*

Sir W. Aye, and give too, my lord; the man who sincerely repents of error, is farther removed from vice, than one who has never been guilty—This letter is a sufficient and convincing proof of your contrition. Take her; she is, and shall be yours.

Lord Eust. My wife!

[*Embracing her.*

Har. The commands of a father must not be resisted.—O! my lord, how different are my present sensations from those I sustained, when I ventured to bestow this hand without his sanction!—But take it; it is yours for ever now.

Lord Eust. Then every wish of my fond heart is accomplished.

Col. Joy to your lordship, and my dearest Harriot!

Fram. I sincerely wish your ladyship all the happiness which I well know you have deserved.

Lord Eust. And you, my friend, shall share it with us, who have steered my course to this blest harbour, through all the shoals and quick-sands of my folly.—You shall be happy too, if ought within my fortune or my power can render it so.

Fram. Continue to deserve your present bliss, my lord, and I am over-paid.

Mrs. Win. I think I have a right to partake in your ladyship's felicity, from the principal share I have had in bringing this event to pass. I hope that Lord Delville has been properly informed——

Enter Captain LLOYD.

——That man is my perpetual torment.

Capt. Why, hey day, Sir William! what wind's a blowing now? You seem to have cast anchor, when I thought you were putting out to sea.—Here is the whole crew assembled; Miss Winifred and all.—Do women fight duels? If I had them on board the Dreadnought, I'd clap them all under hatches before she engaged.—But come along, baronet, you don't mean to slack sail now, I hope—I thought by this time we should have made a few eyelet holes, in the enemy's rigging.

Sir W. I hope, my good friend, you will excuse my seeming inattention to your impatient bravery, when I tell you that our contest has ended happily, and that you may now wish all this company, as well as Lord Eustace, joy.

Capt. He is to be married, then, it seems—I hope, madam, you'll believe me another time.

[*To Mrs. Winifred.*

Mrs. Win. Yes, when you tell truth, captain—But at present you happen to be a little out in your soundings, for the ship's name is not the *Lady Anne*, but the *Lovely Harriot*—the country girl you talked of.

Capt. Well, well, all's one to me.—So she is bound for the port of matrimony, I am content—and so I wish your lordship, your ladyship, and all your ships, a prosperous voyage to the island of happiness.

Sir William

*They promise fair to reach that wish'd-for port :
For virtue, though of winds and waves the sport,
By passions shaken, and by dangers crost,
On life's great sea, is never wholly lost.
Some power divine conducts her swelling sails,
And of her due reward she seldom fails.*

EPILOGUE.

Written by the Author of the Prologue,

And spoken by Mrs. CLIVE.

*I LONG to know, dread sirs, with due submission,
How you approve me as a politician ?
The thought was mine.—I told the scrib'ling dame,
This part of Winifred, is much too tame :
Ask but the town, said I, they'll all agree,
That a tame character will not suit me :
I hate such lifeless, water-gruel stuff ;
Quicken her well with politics and snuff :
Small quantities of both will be but teizing ;
Give them enough, and set the town a sneezing.
Her scribbling vanity at this was stung ;
Would have disputed—Hold, says I, you're wrong,
Do n't be so rash, to draw on me your tongue ;
I have a weapon, should I take the field,
A better never did a woman wield ;
You'll find, when once my passion is afloat,
The soul of Cæsar, in a petticoat !
' Aye, but,' says she ' in politics there's danger,
' To courts, and state affairs, I'm quite a stranger,'
So much the better, thou most simple woman,
Blunders in politics are not uncommon,*

*When you mistake, the town will think you clever,
Think that you mean great folks, and clap for ever;
Old England, like a boy, loves wicked fun,
Abuse your betters, and your work is done.
Small game the English spirit will not follow,
'Tis at the nobler chace you whoop and hollow!
O'er hedge and ditch you belter-skelter fly;
Start but a statesman—Yoax! the bounds full cry!
To pick up lesser game you will not stay,
While the fox runs, the hare may steal away:
Our auth'ress is the hare—who trembling sits,
'Till she escapes this dreadful pack of wits:
She hopes you will not hunt her, she's so small,
But hark to mercy as the noblest call.*

EPILOGUE.

Written by HENRY JAMES PYE, Esq.

*WELL! after much perplexity and rout,
At length the wish'd-for wedding's brought about.
A foolish girl! so near to throw away
Love, rank, and reputation, in a day.
And all for what? from prejudice, in truth,
Though christened delicacy, now, forsooth.
If (sentimental nonsense thrown aside)
To cards and politics she had applied,
For common cares, her soul had been too great,
And only felt an ardor for the state;
Had glow'd alone with freedom's glorious flame,
And next to PAM's had honour'd PAOLI's name.*

*Twice in our annals, baffled France and Spain
Have wept the glories of a female reign:
With great success I think we now might try
The influence of a female ministry.
In private life how well we're used to sway,
More husbands know, than you'll persuade to say;
And how finances properly to rule,
All ladies learn, who ever kept a pool.
Ye generous spirits, who approve my plan,
And wish at least an equal sway with man,*

*(And some malicious wits so bold we find,
To say this comprehends all woman-kind)
In favour of a female bard, to-night,
Boldly assert a Briton's dearest right ;
From man, from haughty man's tyrannic laws,
To your decision she submits her cause ;
Rests on your candor, all her hopes and fears,
And only claims—a Trial by her Peers.*

THE END.





